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DIVINITY OF CHRIST:

TOGETHER WITH

THOUGHTS ON THE PASSION OF
JESUS CHRIST.

JOHN P. WALSH

BY THE

RT. REV. S. H. ROSECRANS, D.D.,

BISHOP OF POMPEIOPOLIS, AND AUXILIARY OF CINCINNATI.

CINCINNATI:

JOHN P. WALSH, No. 170 SYCAMORE STREET.

1866.

THE DIVINITY OF CHRIST

THOUGHTS ON THE PASSION OF
JESUS CHRIST

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P R E F A C E .

OF the logical soundness of the proofs that our Lord Jesus Christ is truly God, and therefore rightful Teacher of all men, advanced in the pages of this little book the author entertains not the shadow of a doubt.

Whether these proofs are so shaped as to attract the consideration of his countrymen, and lead them toward "The true Light that enlighteneth every man that cometh into this world" is a matter of doubt, to be solved only by the experiment of publishing, which has accordingly been tried.

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S. H. ROSECRANS.

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PREFACE

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A. H. ROSECRANCE

DEDICATION.

TO MY FATHER AND FRIEND

THE MOST REV. JOHN BAPTIST PURCELL, D.D.

ARCHBISHOP OF CINCINNATI,

THE INSPIRER OF THIS AND COUNTLESS WORTHIER UNDERTAKINGS

FOR THE HONOR OF JESUS CHRIST,

THESE PAGES ARE

AFFECTIONATELY AND REVERENTLY INSCRIBED.

THE SOUL'S DESTINY.

THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

THE SOUL'S DESTINY.

Without being fully conscious of it, even believers are influenced very much by the views and sentiments of those about them. They pray every day, "Thy kingdom come;" they believe in the future judgment and life everlasting, yet they feel, in regard to comfort, money, honor, very much as worldlings feel, and talk very much as they talk. The reason of this is, because they have never argued out their own position; never settled where they stand. Their lives are not logical. It is not precisely that they believe one thing and do another; but that they hesitate about believing any thing, all the time they are acting. They do not hesitate about believing abstract things — general truths, such as: God exists;

the wicked shall be punished; the just rewarded; — but about the application of these truths to themselves. There is the question before each of us always, Am I in friendship with God? am I going on, as the days pass, and the nights glide by, in the way that leads to life? but it is very seldom thought on enough to be answered. Sometimes we defer answering it to a more convenient season, saying, It shall be my occupation after I have disposed of what is now pressing on my mind; but, generally, we let it glide away from our attention without any greeting or promise, because we are not so much afraid of it as we are pre-occupied with other matters. There are so many beauties in the world, so many pleasures, or vexations that we are quite engrossed by them; therefore we do not feel the time passing and eternity coming on — we take no thought of the morrow.

Yet, why not answer it at once, with honesty and sincerity? You can not avoid any pain by not looking whence it comes. You know that you must die and be judged according to your works. Why not anticipate the judgment, and make up your accounts before you enter on the interview about the final settlement?

It is the question of questions; the only

one you can not afford to leave unanswered. It is pure bravado, if not phrenzy, to talk about taking your chances, and letting yourself remain adrift on the sea of life until you strike. You can not afford to take your chance; you can not endure to dwell in the "devouring fire" and with the "everlasting burnings;" you can not afford to be lost.

It is said that some diplomatic agent, when he saw that the difficulties between the two parties were being rapidly adjusted, all at once stopped proceedings by the question, "But, gentlemen, what is to become of me?"

That is the question of the soul. The world is busy at political matters and commercial prospects, and war and peace, making arrangements about progress and changes of all kinds; and common prudence calls upon us to ask, in the midst of this shifting about, and rising and falling, what is to become of me? The world will go on in the circle it has been following for ages; nations will set forth and flourish as of yore; wars and pestilences will leave fields waste and firesides desolate; youth will wanton, and old age drivel, as in times gone by; the sun will be shining on, the mountains lifting up their heads, the ocean still heaving and tossing in its mighty bed, and what will have become of me?

Human prudence, I say, ought to bring this question home to every heart; for it is a question of more than bodily life and death. Each one of us is to live for ever:—To LIVE, to love, hate, enjoy, suffer, desire, to think, to remember, to understand. We have not words to express all that life is. It means all that the soul can do or suffer. It is the life of the soul that rules the body; that sways the muscles at its will; that makes the heart throb, and sends the blood leaping through the veins—and this life is to last for ever. For ever the understanding will be busy, and the will be loving and hating FOR EVER! the stars will grow old and fade out in the heavens; the solid rocks will be worn away by rains, and dews, and winds: but the soul will never grow old; never approach its end. What is now in the visible world being destroyed, a new fiat may go forth; a new creation spring into existence, run through its countless changes and close, and still the soul will be living on.

We do not, we can not bring this idea, in all its fullness, home to our hearts. It is too vast for us to take it all in. We say, "live for ever" and "for all eternity," as lightly as we speak of going to breakfast; but we do so because we utter these words without catching

their sense. Short periods of time that we can measure by counting, as it were, our sensations, we can understand better, yet not fully. To one in pain how wearily the hours drag by, and how intolerably long before he can hope for relief! In the midst of enjoyments how many delicious sensations can crowd themselves into a single hour! What would you say to a year of pain? What to a single month of unmingled delight? Yet, a year is less than an atom to the bulk of the mighty earth, in our endless life. A year is but the revolution of the earth around the sun a single time; yet, when its revolutions have ceased, and its track through space is left void, eternity will be no nearer its end than now.

We talk of this life in the flesh being long to groan in; to bear burdens of hunger and thirst, of heat and cold, and heaviness of heart; and we lose courage, grow faint and sigh for death. But in our impatience we deceive ourselves. Life is, at best, but a few score years—the average but thirty—the most prodigiously long a little over a hundred. What are a hundred years to Eternity?

To the fallen angels it seems but yesterday when they were hurled, like lightning, from the battlements of Heaven. The spirits of the

just say, "To-day we entered into the joy of the Lord;" for with them it is for ever to-day. You know the legend of the Jew who denied our Saviour a cup of water, on His way to Calvary from Jerusalem. He was condemned to live on in the flesh to the end of time. His malediction fell back upon his own head, and passed into his bones and blood, quickening them with preternatural life. So he lived on. His children and grandchildren, and their children grew old and gray, and died. He, too, grew old and gray, but did not die. He lived on until those of his own blood became strangers to him, and his thoughts and feelings were those of a forgotten generation. In his loneliness he sought to die, and could not. He went into the thickest of battles; all fell on the gory plain about him; he alone untouched. He sought shipwreck, and the waves would not swallow, but cast him on the shore. He trod upon the nests of adders, and they could not sting him. He grappled with the plague in crowded cities, and, when it had spent its fury, sat with the unburied corpses piled about, alone alive. In the midst of earthquakes, the shattering walls and crumbling earth left him a spot to stand on in hated safety; and the lava, hissing from the volcano, rolled on, devouring all else, harmlessly by his feet. And

so he is to walk on, until finally the Archangel's trumpet shall sound the hour of his deliverance, and he has worked out, to the last letter, the awful sentence, "Tarry till I come." Yet, his deliverance will be at the end of time — at the beginning of Eternity. If his desolation seems long what will be the desolation of souls that are lost, over whose ending no trumpet shall ever sound?

There is, also, a legend, told in many ways, of Brother Francis and the Bird of the Silver Voice. Brother Francis left the monastery one afternoon to gather from the surrounding wood an arm-load of sticks, for fuel. When he reached the forest his ear was greeted by the sweetest warble that ever came from the throat of a bird. He must pause one moment to hear the end of the song before beginning to gather his fuel. So he stood still, and the warbling went on, so full, so rich, so sweet, that he almost held his breath in ecstasy. When it ceased, "How short it was," he said; then gathered his fuel and returned. He rang the bell at the monastery gate, which was opened by a porter that he did not know. "Who are you, that take the place of Brother John?" he inquired. "Rather, who are you?" was the reply. "Ah! I am Brother Francis." "There is no Brother Francis." The Prior

came, and he also said there was no Brother Francis. Then the oldest brother of the house was called, and he tottered in on his cane, and told how in his youth he had heard some gray-haired brothers tell, that long ago, when they were young, Brother Francis had gone, one afternoon, for wood, and never returned; killed, doubtless, by the wild beasts. So they counted the years, and found that Brother Francis had listened to the bird's song one hundred and fifty years, and thought it still too short.

So, in Heaven, the heart stands still, in the fullness of its joy; and, as it began, will remain transfixed for ever.

Saint Teresa built a hermitage in her uncle's garden, and sought to flee from every sound and sight; and when asked why she desired to dwell in solitude, answered the one word, "Eternity." I must live through all eternity. All that God has made is very beautiful, it is true: the sounds that fill the ear, the sights that chain the eye, the affections that seize the heart, are sweet indeed; but they are passing, and the soul lives on forever. You see the flash of the meteor, and it is gone before you can say to your companion, "Look there!" A cloud-shadow darkens the plain, and it lies black, on the mountain beyond, ere

you have done saying, "How sombre!" So pass the joys and sorrows of this life of the flesh!

Youth, full of hope and fire, is gone ere the heart knows what it hopes, or why it is warm. Manhood fades away ere the soul has set itself to begin the struggle of life; and old age freezes in death, while trying to lie down to a little repose. "The figure of this world;" all that appears to the eye, and ear, and touch, and taste, "passeth away," swift as the north wind over the prairie — and eternal life remains.

You and I must live on in this same individuality that each of us calls I, for ever and ever. All other thoughts are of little weight in comparison with this. We must live on, thinking, remembering, hating, loving, enjoying, or suffering as eagerly as now, for ever more.

Poets and artists grow enthusiastic over fame, and men speak of winning a place in history, as of some thing worth the labor of life, and life itself. In the Day of Judgment all accounts will be made up, history will be closed, and shame and infamy, in the sense in which we use them, will be buried and forgotten; yet the Day of Judgment is but the opening of life, the threshold of that house which is to be our home for ever, and that

home will be of our own choosing, either in darkness or in light. Which shall we choose? is the question of the soul.

The true grandeur of human nature has its root in this power of choice. It is not that mind can rule matter, enslave the winds, and make lightning its messenger; but it is in the awful power it has of choosing its own destiny for eternity; of modifying, at its pleasure, the face of God's universe, in a manner as enduring as God Himself.

You have this tremendous power. I have it. Each of us is great, because he has it: so great that he may well stand in awe when he thinks of it. This is the essential quality in which all men are equal. The distinctions of sex, age, condition; those based on gifts of mind, and body, and fortune, are but accidental and transitory; but the power of choice will remain, for ever, in its results. Which Eternity will you choose? is the question that lies at the threshold of every reason-guided life. Put off answering it, and you simply put off the use of reason, but do not escape its responsibility. You can not find the answer to it in sense, or feeling, or sentiment. I do not say that the world that seeks your heart and thoughts is not beautiful. It is beautiful, but not beautiful enough for the soul. Art, nature,

pleasure, success in life, wealth, friendship can charm the sense — they can not fill the soul. "The eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear with hearing."

The soul was not made to sit for ever in the prison-house of the flesh, and look out upon the universe through the windows of sense. It is one day to be brought face to face with Truth and Goodness. "All is vanity," not because there is evil in it, but because whatever there is of good and beautiful is not the kind for which the soul hungers. It is figure; the soul wants substance. It is transient; the soul wants the enduring. Let not this question of the soul wait for an answer longer. I ask this, not because God needs you, or the Church wants you, or society claims you; but, because you need yourself.

Trifle no longer with the mighty issue of your everlasting destiny. There is a task allotted to you: use your reason to find what it is, and your energies to accomplish it. For this, time was given you. For this, the sun shines over you, and your "Heavenly Father feedeth you." For this, you have all you have of breath, and life, and wit, and sense.

If you are a Catholic, you know the task; you know the commandments, and have but to do them. If you are in sin, you know the

remedy ; if in doubt, you know where to seek instruction. Attend to it at once. If you are not a Catholic your first duty is prayer ; your next, study, to find what you know, and what you do not know ; what you believe and what you doubt, and see what farther can be done.

Sailing on the sea of life, you and I meet here in these pages, for one moment, perhaps, never to meet again : and may my warning cry ring upon your ears, and echo back on mine, to be heeded by both. "Look well whither you are going — and God speed !"

DIVINITY OF CHRIST.

THE DIVINITY OF CHRIST.

CHAPTER I.

WHAT THINK YE OF CHRIST? WHOSE SON IS HE?

To any American attempting to work out the problem of life, the question at the heading of this chapter occurs, at the very outset. A Chinese, or a South Sea Islander, who has never heard the name of Jesus Christ, might dive into his own thoughts or interrogate material nature to find truth; but those who know of Him, of His claims to be the Teacher and Saviour of all men, can not, without doing violence to their consciences, neglect to investigate those claims. We shall, therefore, state them and the grounds upon which they rest, at once. JESUS CHRIST is, in Himself, one Divine Person, having two distinct, complete, and perfect natures: the Divine and Human. The Divine nature He had from all Eternity; the

Human nature he took in His Incarnation. To us, therefore, He is Creator, Redeemer, Teacher, Saviour, Judge. Such is the Catholic Faith.

Of all these propositions the first is the most important, viz: JESUS CHRIST is a Divine Person. To prove it, therefore, shall be our chief aim.

No one can tell what arguments prove Jesus Christ to be God without knowing what "God" means. One must enter into the consideration of this subject with his conception of Divinity sharply defined. Sometimes the word is taken for "object of worship," as in the expressions: "the God of this world," "heathen gods;" meaning "those things which the world and the heathen worship;" and, perhaps, it would be correct to say — God is that Being who is the rightful object of supreme worship. But then who is HE? Reflect, reader, on your own conceptions; for I gather the answer to this question as much from your thoughts as from my own. In the first place, whoever is worthy of absolute worship must be a distinct, definite, personal being, who has his own thoughts, will, aims, and understanding. I can not hold myself amenable to an abstraction any more than I can bow down to wood and stone. In the next place, he must have no imperfections; for I can not worship what I can criticize.

Therefore He must be eternal in duration, immutable in essence, infinite in power, wisdom, and holiness, and all-pervading in presence.

Space is very vast; so vast as to confuse the imagination trying to travel from star to star in its azure fields. But there is a limit to it—the last orbit of the outermost star—in the end. But though it were a million times multiplied, God is greater.

Time, the measure of succession, reaches back to an antiquity that seems to defy computation; but God is immeasurably older. Time will end, but God will never end. Whatever is made is changeable: from the flower that blooms and fades in a day to the sun that shines through countless ages, to finish its work at last; but God is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. To him, no knowledge, no love, no event of any kind is either new or old. In Him is no Past or Future, but only an unchangable Now.

We witness exhibitions of power in nature that appal us: in the ocean, in tempests, earthquakes, and in the motion of the stars. But God's power knows no limit; "He can do all things, and nothing is hard or impossible to Him."

Science explores much; but God knows all things. Whatever is, or is thought, is open to

His view. "He that made the eye, can He not see?" and "He that contrived the ear, will He not hear?"

His Holiness is spotless. He can not disregard justice. He must punish crime and reward innocence. He must have a care for the things He has made.

To be God is to be infinitely removed from all that is created; to be infinite in essence, omniscient, all-powerful, all-holy, all-wise, all-happy, all-good, unchangeable: and this is meant when it is said Jesus Christ is God.

He is the Maker of all that is created: Angels, men, animals, and the worlds they inhabit; and, as He made them from choice, He is their absolute owner and supreme Master. In His sight they are nothing; having no rights but to adore, and receive with thanks, what He is pleased to bestow.

We venerate angels for their holiness and power; we reverence good men because they are friends of God: but we adore God. We annihilate ourselves before Him, and say: "Behold, O Creator, the work of Thy hands. Dispose of me in body and soul, in time and in eternity, as Thou wilt; for there is none to rise up and question thy work."

The submission of the understanding im-

plied in adoration is Faith, whereby we believe all that God teaches, because He teaches it.

The submission of our desire for happiness is Hope, whereby we look upon God as our sole Helper.

The submission of our will is Charity, whereby we love God supremely, and all other good for His sake.

Idolatry, the most hideous of crimes, consists in making God equal to some creature.

Therefore when we say Jesus Christ is God we remove Him infinitely from all comparison with any man or angel, or any possible created being; we make Him infinitely greater than all of them put together. In Catholic Theology Mary the Mother of Jesus is the greatest of created beings; the nearest to God in power, wisdom, beauty, grace. But MARY is nothing in comparison with God, just as the bird that flies highest does not come near the stars.

When you think of God, then, reader, think of Him as exceeding all conception, as one higher than all that is lofty, vaster than all space, more ancient than Heaven and chaos, stronger than all forces, wiser than all wisdom you can fancy, more living than all you know of life, holier than what seems to you spotless. Think of Him as the One who "alone

is Holy, alone is the Lord." JESUS CHRIST is He.

The argument to establish this conclusion is as follows :

Jesus Christ says He is God ;
But His testimony is true ;
Therefore He is God.

CHAPTER II.

THE MAJOR PREMISE.

JESUS CHRIST SAYS HE IS GOD.

I assume the books of the New Testament as a true history of what Jesus Christ said ; and out of many shall instance but one or two occasions in which He says He is God. The first of these is in the tenth chapter of the Gospel of St. John.

At the Feast of the Dedication a great crowd of Jews accosted Jesus in a public place, and demanded of Him an explicit declaration concerning Himself. He answered them by declaring, in unmistakable language, that He was of one nature with God the Father. Here is the entire passage :

24. The Jews, therefore, came round about him, and said to him : How long dost thou hold our souls in suspense : if thou be the Christ, tell us plainly.

25. Jesus answered them : I speak to you,

and you believe not: the works that I do in the name of my Father, they give testimony of me:

26. But you do not believe, because you are not of my sheep.

27. My sheep hear my voice: and I know them, and they follow me:

28. And I give them life everlasting: and they shall not perish for ever, and no man shall snatch them out of my hand.

29. That which my Father hath given me, is greater than all: and no one can snatch *them* out of the hand of my Father.

30. I and the Father are one.

31. The Jews then took up stones, to stone him.

Now that the saying "I AND MY FATHER ARE ONE" means ONE in essence or nature, is clear, (1.) from the words themselves, (2.) from the argument used, (3.) from the understanding of the bystanders, and (4.) from the reiteration of it by our Lord.

1. From the words. When two are called one, in any other respect than essence or being, the respect is always added to the one as a qualification. Thus, persons are said to be one in affection, in aims, in blood, and the like. But when the word one is used without quali-

fication it can mean nothing else than *one being or nature.*

2. From the argument. Our Lord's argument to prove that no man shall snatch His sheep from His hand, is as follows:

"My Father—God—is greater than all that is not God;

But I and my Father are one;

Therefore no man shall snatch them from my Hand."

This argument would be sophistical if He were not one in essence with the Father, for then His omnipotence would not follow from the omnipotence of His Father, as He evidently makes it follow.

3. The understanding of the bystanders. The Jews understood Him to say that He was one in essence with God: for they took up stones to stone Him for blasphemy; because that "being a man He made Himself God."

4. From His reiteration. The Jews understood Him precisely as He meant to be understood; for He reiterated His declaration, declaring that the Father had endowed Him with His own sanctity inseparable from His nature, and sent Him into the world; that is, consented to His taking flesh; and appeals to His works to show that "the Father is in Him and He

in the Father," (John x. 38.) And "they sought therefore to take Him; but He escaped out of their hands." (*Ib.* 39.)

If He saw that they mistook His meaning would He not have explained?

Again: In St. John, viii, 58, Jesus closes a conversation with certain Jews, by an emphatic assertion of His divinity: "Amen, amen, I say to you: Before Abraham was made, I AM."

"I am" is the name given to himself, by Almighty God, when He appeared to Moses. Exod. iii, 14.

Its appropriateness will appear to any one reflecting on the nature of God and of time. Time is successive duration. The revolutions of the hands around the face of a clock; of the earth on its axis; of the planets in their orbits, constitute hours, days, years: multiples of these make ages; and the Latins designate the existence of all that knows beginning, development, change, extinction, as *saecula*. Where there is succession there must be three phases of duration: past, present, future. But in God there is no succession. He could not change without growing better or worse; and if He could grow better or worse He would not be God: so the distinguishing attribute of God is essential, unchangeable Being; and this is designated by the phrase, I AM WHO AM.

So again the Jews understood Him: "They took up stones to cast at Him." And He did not explain but, "hid himself and went out of the temple."

Again: St. John the Evangelist learned the doctrine of Christ from Himself. And He opens his Gospel with the words:

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

"The same was in the beginning with God.

"All things were made by Him."

That is, he ascribes to Jesus Christ in as brief and clear terms as can be conceived: Eternity of Being — "in the Beginning was the Word;" Divinity of Nature — "and the WORD WAS GOD;" and Creating Power — "all things were made by Him.

The same idea was reasserted and developed with wonderful power in the first chapter of St. Paul's Epistle to the Hebrews.

JESUS continually exacted the acts of faith, adoration, and obedience which are due to God alone. "He that loveth father or mother, or houses or lands more than ME is not worthy of ME."* "If any man will follow Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me.† "If thou wouldst be perfect, go and sell all thou hast and come and follow Me."‡

* Matt. x. 37. † Mark viii. 34. ‡ Matt. xix. 24.

"This is eternal life, that they may know Thee and whom thou hast sent, JESUS CHRIST." (John xvii. 3.) "All power is given to ME in Heaven and on earth." (*Ib.* xxviii. 18.) "If you love ME keep MY commandments." (*Ib.* xiv. 15.)

And He rewarded all who rendered these acts to Him. Simon Peter said, "Thou art Christ, the Son of the Living God;" and Jesus answered, "Blessed art thou." (Matt. xvi. 16, 17.) The woman having an issue of blood confessed His divinity by kissing the hem of His garment, and he said, "Thy faith hath made thee whole." (Matt. ix. 22.) The centurion confessed Him master of diseases, as he was master of his soldiers; and Jesus commended him, saying, "Verily, verily, I have not found such faith in Israel." (Matt. viii. 10. The Samaritan woman wondered at His knowledge (John iv. 26), and He assured her that He was the fount of life eternal.

To the waves He said, "Peace, be still;" to the devils in possessed bodies, He spoke words of command; before Pilate he said, "I am a king;"* before the high priest, "I am the Son of God!"† Wherever He was He always spoke as one having authority; in fact Monsieur RENAN, the last Julian who has undertaken a contest with THE GALLILEAN, admits that in

* Matt. xxvii. 11. † Matt. xxvi. 64.

the latter years of His life Jesus *imagined Himself the Son of God*.*

No one indeed can read the Scriptures, and other records of Christian tradition, without being satisfied that Jesus taught Himself to be God, and was so understood by both friends and enemies. That charge was one of those that produced His condemnation; and Salvador, a Spanish Jew of the seventeenth century, contends that the condemnation was purely legal, for that reason.

We know that St. Stephen was stoned to death for asserting His divinity.† We know that all the Apostles went abroad, over the world, confiding in the belief of His divine power, preaching and working miracles. We know that all the Church believed in that Divinity with such unanimity that when Arius arose, in the fourth century, to deny it, he found not a friend in the episcopate.

With such an array of testimony before us it seems astonishing that any one was ever found to deny that Jesus taught Himself to be God. What use is there in examining particular texts, and quibbling about the Greek or the Vulgate of this or that passage, in order to raise doubts? The whole stream of Christian

* Renan's "Life of Christ." † Acts vi.

tradition runs in that direction. The belief in His power to work miracles, the doctrine of the Mass, of the Sacraments, of the office of the Church, of pardon for sin through a mediator, are all founded on the belief that Christ is God.

Jesus Christ therefore said He was God.

CHAPTER III.

THE MINOR PREMISE.

JESUS A CREDIBLE WITNESS.

Whether JESUS CHRIST is God or not, is a question of fact, not of speculation. Were it of speculation, we never could settle it. All we know of God is that He is infinitely perfect, and therefore incomprehensible. Hence, from our understanding of any particular being, we can not tell whether He is God or not, unless on his word.

Jesus Christ has given us His word that He is God — and His testimony is true.

I can not discuss here the law of testimony, at length and technically. I merely refer to its main features: such as are patent to a common understanding.

A witness is credible when it does not appear that he is either deceived or deceiving. An asserter is always presumed to be right until he is proved to be wrong. Now a witness

can be shown to have been deceived, by his general character, the nature of his assertions, and by counter-testimony.

Thus, when you know a man to be in the habit of blundering, pay but little attention to what he says. If he tells you the river is on fire, or that Smith, with whom your sensible friend said he was conversing an hour before, has been dead a week, you laugh at him, because you know he is deceived. In like manner, when a rogue tells you something, you suspend your assent; all the more if you see that he would profit by deceiving you, and you would have no means of finding him out.

A witness can be impeached, therefore, in two ways: first, by showing that he is a block-head, and has been imposed upon; and secondly, by showing that he is a rogue, and could make it profitable to himself to lie.

Can the testimony of Jesus Christ, that He is God, be impeached in either way? Let us examine:

Monsieur Renan says that Jesus was an enthusiast, and deluded himself into the belief that he was the son of God; but in saying so he outrages truth and piety. For even we can see, from what He said and did, that our Lord was exceedingly wise; He taught a system of dogma both deep and coherent, and a morality

at once simple and perfect; He astonished the scribes by His learning, and baffled all the lawyers in their efforts to entrap Him. But the beginning of all wisdom is self-knowledge.

Therefore Christ knew Himself, His own powers, capabilities, nature, and position. Therefore to suppose Him deceived when He said He was God is an outrage upon truth.

Moreover, in all His life He never showed any vehement human emotion more than three times: once, when He scourged the money-changers out of the temple (Matt. xxi. 12, 13; Luke xi. 15, 16, 17): once, when He wept over Lazarus (John xi. 35); and once, when He was suffering His agony in the garden (Matt. xxvi. 38; Mark xiv. 33, 34; Luke xxii. 44): but in none of these was there anything like enthusiasm or self-exaltation. He was always the type of the perfect man; the very incarnation of truthfulness, justice and charity. It outrages common sense to suppose that such a man did not know the difference between creature and Creator, eternal and temporal, the Infinite Substance of the Immaculate Deity and the perishable nature of man: but could, in later life imagine that he was God if it were not true.

2. Nor does Jesus, when He says He is God, deceive.

In the first place, His modern enemies admit that He was good and holy, and that He laid

down His life for justice. But he would not be good or holy were He capable of deception. Liars shall not enter the kingdom of Heaven. Can any one believe that He who taught the way to Heaven lost it Himself by crime? If Jesus Christ deceived, then the Jews were right in putting him to death for blasphemy. But this hypothesis is too impious to brook discussion. Moreover, He had no motive for deceiving. Assume that He did not speak the truth: then he must have had some interest to serve by lying. But what interest can be conceived of that would not have been better served by saying the opposite of what He said? He lived with the poor, did good as secretly as He could, made no party for Himself, incurred the hatred of the powerful and influential, and suffered a felon's death—for which of the world's three gifts, think you: honor, money, or bodily pleasure? He renounced them all, from the Manger to the Cross.

“He coveted honor,” says Monsieur Renan, “and made the Cross His chariot of fame.” Mawkish sentimentalism! The Cross would never have been His chariot of fame if He had not risen from the dead. Had He remained in it His tomb would never have been glorious. Had He desired honor, when the multitude sought to seize Him and make Him king, He

would not have fled away and remained alone. He would have conciliated the Scribes and Pharisees, and spoken fair words to the Roman Proconsul. But He had to assert His Divinity; and even before the judges who were panting for his condemnation, when adjured He answered, "I am the Son of God: And the high priest rent his garments and said, What further need have we of witnesses? Behold, you have heard the blasphemy. What think ye? And they answered, He is guilty of death:" that is for making Himself the Son of God.*

How easy it would have been for Him to gain honor with them by simply explaining that they had misunderstood him.

How many motives of the kind which actuate men in the world He had to say He was not the Son of God. And to say it, not one but its truth.

* Matthew xxvi. 64.

CHAPTER IV.

MIRACLES.

But apart from the consideration of His personal character, there are irresistible guarantees for the veracity of Jesus Christ in His miracles. To these He often alluded, in language such as in John x: 38, He addressed to the Jews, "If you believe not Me, believe My works."

But of miracles we must speak somewhat at length.

There are two infidel theories about miracles: one is, that they are impossible; and the other of "Monsieur Renan, Member of the Institute," that "no one has ever been proved."

The first theory ought to own David Hume as its author, for he spent much in dressing it. It proceeds from a ratiocination of the following character: The physical laws of the universe are unalterable; but miracles suppose an alteration of these physical laws;

therefore miracles are impossible. On this theory a man named Combe wrote a book on the "Constitution of Man," in which he enlarged greatly on phrenology and other aids to destiny --- and which has been sold cheap, and largely circulated among the people.

Now what is a physical law which is so like that of the Medes and Persians? An example from chemistry and natural philosophy will answer. It is a "law" that water will freeze at 33° and boil at 212° Fahrenheit. It is a "law" that the equivalent of three forces is required for an equilibrium. It is a "law" that falling bodies descend with accelerated motion. It is a "law" that acids and alkalies neutralize each other. Is that the law? Why, one would suppose that to be not the law, but the phenomenon itself. That is the way that nature acts, not the way it *must* act; and natural law means nothing more than the way in which nature ordinarily works. Now, with this idea of natural law --- and is it not the correct one? --- what becomes the immutability of the laws that govern the world? A miracle is then a sensible effect out of the ordinary routine of nature, and no more impossible than any thing else extraordinary. Is it impossible for God to set aside routine?

But look a little deeper into this idea of

physical law. Of all things that exist or happen God is the principal cause. Of second causes there are two classes: free and necessary. Necessary causes, such as material motion, heat, cold, vegetable and animal growth, are those whose action is determined by their nature. But the efficiency of a cause is not a general regulation or predetermined system, but an active principle within it. It is not the physical law that boils the water, but the fire under the kettle. It is not the predetermined arrangement that makes the grass grow and the flowers bloom; but it is the action of light and heat and other agencies, weighed, measured, and distributed by Providence. You can not count the thousand hues, the variations of shape, grain, texture, size, of the rose as you scatter its leaves; but He who made them had to count them, had to consider and weigh each particular of the intricate work. The action of second necessary causes is therefore but one remove from the immediate action from God; the efficiency is all from Him. A miracle is also from Him, and no harder to do than His ordinary works. It is a miracle to heal the sick without medicine; but no harder than to give the healing power to medicine. It is a miracle to raise a dead man to life; yet no harder than to make what was nothing a liv-

ing man. In general, it is a miracle to produce marked changes in the material world in an extraordinary way; but no harder than to produce them in the ordinary way.

All phenomena in the physical world come from God. Miracles have this distinctive among them : that they come from God, not as the working of the machinery of the world for the general design, but as intended to arrest attention and call the thoughts to Him. In a great army each one goes on, heedless of the roar and bustle, until his name is called by his commander : so in this world, amid the working of innumerable causes, and succession of countless events, we would go on our way, unless God, by some extraordinary event would stop us, saying as it were, "Wait, I want to speak to you!"

From this conception of miracle it is easy to dispose of Mr. Renan's assertion, that no miracle has ever been proved because none was ever wrought before a discriminating audience. What did the ancient Jews know of the laws of nature, since discovered by the scientific men of France? How could those stupid peasants and mechanics tell whether what they saw was an effect wrought by God, or a result of a scientific operation. A miracle, to be well authenticated, would have to be performed in

a room prepared for the purpose in the presence of learned naturalists, scientific physiologists, judicious philosophers; in a word, before a committee of the French "Institut," and the experiment repeated as often as called for.

This talk is folly. The spectators do not know a miracle to be from God, because they have previously taken the measure of all natural causes, and see that none of them could have produced it, but because, under the circumstances, it strikes them palpably, as a voice would, as coming from God. They are impressed with conviction without knowing how. When you see a steamboat you do not have to reason to convince yourself that it is not a wind-mill: so the witness of a miracle knows it by sight, though he may never have heard its definition. Multitudes witness and are irresistibly drawn to believe it to be the work of God; and the foundation of their belief is in the last analysis — the foundation of all belief: the veracity of rational nature and of God. Therefore, in testifying to miracles, a fool may be as wise as the whole French *Institut*.

Thus, a fair understanding of what is a miracle, and what are natural laws, is a full answer to all *a priori* objections against the popular belief on the subject.

A miracle can be wrought only by the personal intervention of God. If wrought, then, to substantiate any assertion, it makes Him the author of that assertion. Herein it differs from all jugglery, all effects of sorcery, or of natural, though hidden causes: that it irresistibly inclines the honest beholders to attribute it directly to God, and makes them stand trembling and saying: Speak, Lord; thy servants hear. Nor is it pertinent to discuss the question, whether they would be so affected if they were more scientific, or of a different disposition in any other respect. The point is: God places them in circumstances, in which they can not rationally resist the conviction that He is speaking to them; and, therefore, makes Himself the surety of what they believe.

This is the way in which the miracles of Jesus Christ prove that He is God. And chief among them is the miracle of His Resurrection from the Dead, of which we shall speak without further introduction.

CHAPTER V.

CHRIST'S RESURRECTION THE PROOF OF HIS DIVINITY.

Human science can accomplish much. It can analyze the forces of material nature, and enslave even the mightiest of them to its uses ; but it can not create life or baffle death. Though but a moment is consumed in the passage from life to death, yet that moment is enough to place a measureless gulf between human power and the dead. When the heart ceases to beat, when the mirror held over the mouth of the invalid is not moistened, when there is no tremor in the flesh, no quivering of the nerves, the physicians put away their instruments, the nurses gather up their phials and napkins and sponges, and clear the room. Close the eyes, you that were the oldest friend, raise the windows to air the room, give notice of the funeral. That is a corpse on the bed. Wealth, influence, friendship, science, can never make that heart stir again. God, who created it, alone could give it life. He alone can start the

blood coursing through the veins again, light up the eyes once more, and make the white lips, now clammily compressed on the projecting teeth, move, and say, "I have passed through the shadow and come back." So the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the Dead proves Him to have been God; therefore true in all He taught either by his own lips or through the Church. His enemies had made sure of His death. One of the soldiers had pierced His side, and straightway there gushed forth water and blood. They had laid His body in a sepulcher, and sealing its mouth with a great stone, had stationed guards to watch it. The Chief Priests and Scribes, satisfied with their work, had congratulated one another more than once over the triumph of their policy. Pilate had expressed his relief that the riot was at last over, and the city quiet if not calm. The Apostles and Disciples, scarcely recovered from their fright, were skulking in private houses or stealing into the country two by two, bewildered with the shattering of their hopes, and scarce thinking of returning to their nets. The pious women wept together, and counted over their scanty means to get enough to buy spices and perfumes for the corpse. It was given up by friends and foes that he was dead.

For Him, therefore, to rise from the dead, to put fresh warm life in that clammy flesh, to send living blood once more through those veins, to walk upon the earth once more, to gather his disciples together and teach them again, to explain to them what He meant by allowing Himself to be crucified, to declare to them what He was going to do for them and what He wanted them to do for Him, demonstrated, beyond question, His Divine Nature. It confounded the Jews, as they acknowledged when they told Pilate that should His Body be removed "the last error would be worse than the first."* It reassured all those who might become His disciples, to the end of time; and, as He retained the scars of His wounds as signs of His Glory, it changed the red blood drops from His wounds into red roses in His wreath of triumph.

When Jesus Christ, the Son of Mary and reputed son of Joseph of Nazareth, in Galilee, began to preach a new doctrine, not merely to the peasants and artisans, his social equals, but also in the hearing of the inhabitants of cities; when He denounced the vices of those in power, and told them that the pride of life and love of money had quenched in them the light of conscience, and that they were guiding the people to destruction, they had a right to de-

* Matthew xxvii. 64.

mand of Him by what authority He spoke these things: He conceded the right, and appealed to the miracles He wrought as proof that God was with Him, when private persons were to be convinced; but as a sign to the whole nation He gave His Resurrection from the dead.

“A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh for a sign, but no sign shall be given them save the sign of the Prophet Jonas; as Jonas was three days in the whale’s belly, so the Son of Man shall be three days in the bowels of the earth.” *

“What sign showest Thou to us, that Thou dost these things?” the Pharisees asked Him when He scourged the money-changers from the Temple. He answers, “Destroy this Temple,” (He spoke of the temple of His body), “and in three days I will rebuild it.” † That is: Kill Me, for demeaning myself as the Son of God, and in three days I will bring Myself back into life again, in proof that I had the right to so demean Myself.

In working His other miracles He seems to have had a special motive for each: He changed the water into wine at the nuptial feast in Galilee to show His respect for His mother’s prayer; He raised Lazarus from the dead out of compassion for the grief of his sister; He

* Matthew xii. 39, 40. † Ib. ii. 19.

called the young man of Naim back to life to console the widowed mother.

When he was transfigured he enjoined secrecy on the three Apostles who had seen His glory until after His Resurrection: "Tell the vision to no one until the Son of Man has risen from the dead."* The Resurrection was to be the test-miracle. He appeared before the Jews, saying: "I am the son of God, the creator of Abraham and Moses, the author of knowledge, the dictator of law, the judge of men. I am the way, the truth, and the life: without me there is no salvation. You cling to Moses. He bore testimony of me, and his work is now done, his testament abolished. I am the Only Begotten Son of God, unto whom all power is given on earth and in Heaven. In proof of My truth I shall rise from the dead. I will deliver Myself up to My enemies, and unresisting let them exhaust their malice on Me: they will scatter My disciples, blacken My reputation, outrage My person, take My life, guard My sepulcher: and when their power to do harm has reached its limits I will baffle them all, I will take back the life I laid down, the good name I allowed to be blackened, gather together the disciples that were scattered, establish My Church to overthrow Judaism and paganism, and live on

* Matthew xvii. 9.

through the ages triumphing, as I have triumphed over human craft and violence, to the end of time."

This was the test of His truth: "You shall know that I am God by My rising from the dead."

With this declaration as it were on His lips, Jesus died and was buried. Now it is manifest that if He did rise from the dead God would thereby become responsible for His saying, "I am the Son of God," and so for all else that He taught and did; and if He continued in the grave that He was an imposter, and unreliable in all His teachings, or as St. Paul tells the Corinthians, "If Christ has not risen our preaching is vain, your faith is vain."*

So the chiefs of the synagogue understood the matter, and they determined to prevent the belief of His Resurrection from ever gaining a foothold in the public mind. They were not so absorbed in the satisfaction that His Death gave them as to forget precautions against His outcast followers; and so, like all men who undertake a contest against God, they made themselves useful in furthering His designs by elaborately trying to defeat them.

The Apostles were so stunned, and paralyzed by fear and grief, that they never once thought of looking forward to the Resurrection of Je-

* 1 Corinthians xv. 17.

sus. All that He had told them about it had made but little impression on their minds, so little that some of them would not believe even after He had risen; and the pious women, when they found the sepulcher open and empty, thought the body had been stolen, and said piteously, "They have taken my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him." So God needed witnesses to prove the body had not been stolen; and the craft of the synagogue, falling into its own snare, furnished them.

"We remember," said they to Pilate, "that this seducer said, while He was alive: 'after three days I will arise.'* He is pledged before all the people to come back to life. Now if the body should happen to disappear, and His disciples should give out that He was risen, the tumults would be renewed and redoubled in the city: the last error would be worse than the first." The courtly Pilate, despising their malignity, but deferring to their position, answered, "You have guards, go and watch the sepulcher with as many soldiers as you wish." And these guards were witnesses, the most unexceptionable, to the fact of His Resurrection. The Apostles were shivering with fear in their hiding places, would never have dared to undertake to steal the body. Had they undertaken it they could not have eluded the

* Matthew xxvii. 63.

guard. The fraud attempted by the Pharisees, when they bribed the guards to say that while they slept the Disciples stole the body refutes itself, since if they were sleeping how could they know that His Disciples or any one else stole the body? In fact, the chief priests do not seem to have insisted much on this open imposture; for, when the Apostles, after the descent of the Holy Ghost, announced in the streets of Jerusalem that they were witnesses of the Resurrection, and consequently of the Divinity of Jesus Christ, the leaders of the doomed people of the deicidal city never attempted to convict them of imposture, never squarely took up the question of their veracity, but apprehended them and imprisoned them as disturbers of the peace, as teachers of strange doctrines, and such like vague charges.

Josephus, himself a Jew, attests that the Resurrection of Jesus Christ was a tradition among his people, and Tertullian assures us that Pontius Pilate, in conscience a Christian, sent an account of all these things to Tiberius Cæsar.

You find not many now-a-days who deny very vehemently the fact of Christ's Resurrection; but multitudes who disregard the significance of the fact.

The chief Priests understood its meaning

fully. They saw at a glance that if Jesus of Nazareth arose, as He said He would, He must be, as He said He was, the Son of God. His doctrine must then be true, His Church must have authority, His Sacraments must be efficacious, His worship obligatory on all. So also did the Apostles understand it.

When they were called they left their nets and avocations to follow Him, they were drawn by a charm they did not want explained. In His company they lived in a rapture of wonder at His wisdom, His miracles, His doctrine, from day to day. They knew not what to expect next from Him; but they felt that they had entered upon a new and glorious era. The morning breath of the opening age thrilled them; and, as with populations on the threshold of mighty changes, their hopes were vague visions of peace and plenty, and justice and truth, rather than settled plans tending to clearly defined ends. They heard Him speak of rising from the dead in proof of His Divinity; but as they believed in His Divinity already they scarcely heeded what he said: so when they came up to Jerusalem, where all things that were written concerning the Son of Man were to be accomplished, their hearts beat high with expectation. They did not

note what He said of suffering they felt so sure He was going to a triumph. There might be a tumult in the city. The Scribes and Pharisees might attempt to harm Him, but the people would rise and rescue Him, and, enthroning Him, inaugurate the new age. So, when they found that, instead of eluding His pursuers, He was captured by them; instead of being defended He was assailed by the people; instead of being enthroned as a king He was crucified as a felon;—their hearts sank within them, and their hopes were buried in His sepulcher. "It is all over," they murmured through their tears to one another, in their hiding places; "the vision of beauty has vanished in blood; the sky of the future is veiled in blackness." Go back, and look for your boats and nets on the shores of the lake of Galilee. "You thought it was He who was to redeem Israel," and you were princes in His kingdom of justice. Go back to your labor; Cæsar shall be king; Pilate, proconsul; the Scribes and Pharisees, the rulers; and, as of old, injustice will grow fat; corruption riot in high places; and the poor struggle hopelessly on to their only rest—the grave.

When Mary Magdalen, and Mary, the mother of James and Salome, coming with sweet

spices, found the tomb open, and were told by a man clothed in a white robe: He is not here, He is risen, they did not give way to joy, but they "went out and fled from the sepulcher, for fear and trembling had seized upon them."* And when they told these things to the Apostles, their words seemed as idle tales and were not believed. But Peter and John started to examine for themselves, and, as they went hope dawned faintly in their hearts, and they ran in eagerness. Peter, stooping down at the mouth of the sepulcher, saw the linen clothes lying by themselves, yet still did not believe what seemed too good to be true; but only "returned, wondering in himself at what had happened."

The two disciples, going to Emmaüs, were simply amazed at what the women had said about not finding the body in the tomb; but were slow of heart to believe, although they felt their hearts burning within them while Jesus talked to them along the way.

At last, when he appeared to the women, to Peter, to John, to the two disciples, to the eleven locked in a room together, conviction was forced upon them: as the word now is, the Lord has risen indeed, passed from lip to lip every heart grew tremulous, as if rising and

* Mark xvi. 8.

falling on the waves of an ocean of joy; every eye moistened with delicious tears. That joy was not sensual; not because they could again see Him, hear Him, touch Him; nor friendly, arising from the knowledge that He could suffer no more: but spiritual, because their faith in His Divinity was sealed by His resurrection, their hopes of the golden reign, in the glad future, sprang with His body from the tomb.

St. Thomas declared he would never believe what the rest were telling him until he saw the print of the nails in His hands, and put his hand into the pierced side. And when Jesus, with ineffable sweetness, had made him look at the hands and feet, and touch the sacred wounds, the confession of the conquered doubter was simply, "MY LORD AND MY GOD."*

To the Apostles, as to the Jews, "Christ is risen" meant "Christ is God."

In a sermon of St. Paul's, recorded in Acts xiii, that Apostle declares that God raising Jesus from the dead fulfilled what is written in the second Psalm: "Thou art My Son; this day have I begotten Thee." That is, Jesus, by rising from the dead, demonstrates that it is of Him these words were spoken; and again, in Romans, i, 4, he says, that according to eter-

* John xx. 28.

nal predestination, the Redeemer is "demonstrated to be the Son of God, in power, by the resurrection from the dead of our Lord Jesus Christ."

In the Acts of the Apostles St. Luke calls the preaching of the Gospel "bearing witness to the resurrection of Jesus Christ." "With mighty power the Apostles bore witness to the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ." *

When there was question of filling the place from which Judas had fallen in the Apostolate, St. Peter rose up and said: "Wherefore of these men who have been with us all the time that the Lord Jesus came in and went out among us, beginning from the baptism of John until the day wherein He was taken up from us; one of these must be made a witness, with us, of His resurrection." †

That was the great point to be established. To change the face of the earth; to baffle an atheist philosophy; to refute corrupt religious theories; to overcome the shafts of licentious evil; shatter the idols and overturn the altars of the pagan world, the Apostles were not to argue, refute, ridicule, speculate, theorize; but simply *bear witness* to the resurrection of Christ. Hence those who died for the faith were not called opinionists, but martyrs; that is witnesses of the Resurrection.

* Acts iv. 33. † Ib. i. 21, 22.

That established, all else followed that they taught. If He rose He was God. If He was God He did not come into the world to philosophize and theorize ; but to teach the truth, lay down the law, to give pardon and grace, to be Author and Finisher of our Faith.

CHAPTER VI.

CHRISTIANITY AS A HISTORICAL FACT.

No self-deluding fanatic or designing impostor could ever have produced such an effect as Christianity. Its historical existence proves its supernatural character. As conqueror of the world, Rome once set her foot upon the neck of kings, and held more than half the nations subject by her arms. Now she has a wider dominion, a mightier power by Religion. That power she has wielded more than eighteen hundred years. The work it has wrought is Divine. Therefore its author is God. The work that power wrought is the conversion of the world to Christianity.

Before Christianity appeared the vast majority of mankind were buried in intellectual and moral darkness. The best and purest minded knew not what to believe, or what to do. Study brought only doubt and perplexity. Plato and Socrates could detect errors in others but did not avoid them in themselves. And, as the lights of the people were darkness,

fancy can not paint how great was that darkness in the people themselves.

They made their own gods to suit their passions, which they indulged without restraint or remorse. Their most sacred worship consisted of rites too obscene to be described, and too beastly to be thought on. Every crime found a justification in some theory, or in the example of some god. Having lost faith in God, whose justice is inexorable, and whose power is resistless, they turned all His gifts into means of crime. Every faculty of mind and body, every relation of life, every human sentiment and affection became an avenue of corruption. "To debauch and be debauched," says Tacitus, "was THE AGE."

Jesus Christ had therefore to work a change in the ideas, the aims, the affections, and all the customs of society. He had to roll back the torrent of fashion. The false religion, to be overthrown, was interwoven with all the framework of society. The exploits of the false gods were household words everywhere. Daily the altars smoked with the blood of victims. Daily the consecrated groves were visited by gorgeous processions. Events were dated from the annual *Saturnalia* and *Bacchanalia*; the feasts of Ceres and Jupiter Ammon. Poetry had thrown its drapery of beauty over

mythology, and every wood and lake and fountain was associated with some outgrowth of the prevailing superstition. In feasts and social gatherings, libations were made to the gods, and dishes of meat that had been offered in the temples were served up to the guests.

It is hard to measure the influence of fashion. The great mass of men hold their opinions and maxims of life from custom. "Everybody thinks so," is, to ninety-nine out of every hundred, an ultimate reason for thinking so. Few have the courage to stand up against it, even in little matters. Leaders, or the world's heroes, never brave it, but only try to guide it.

But the preacher of JESUS CHRIST had to oppose it, not in small matters and in one point, but in the greatest matters and in every point. He had to oppose the received opinions of the age as to the nature of God, the manner of worship, the nature and true happiness of man, the constitution of society, the principles of government, the maxims of individual and social life: in a word, "he had to renew the face of the earth."

The first element of the power of fashion that rose angrily up against the new doctrine and the new preachers was prejudice, or that inclination which men have to reject, without examination, whatever tends to disturb their

present persuasions. How strong an influence this is in human society, the history of all inventions, of new works in literature, new opinions in politics amply illustrates.

Judea was the most despised of all countries by the Gentiles, Nazareth was a proverb of evil among the Jews, and the preachers of Christianity were of the lowest and rudest class of Galileans. These men, without any knowledge of literature or of the world, without any friends among the powerful, without any natural gifts of address or eloquence, had to encounter and overcome the prejudices of all classes.

The Emperor was Prince and Pontiff. The change in religion therefore would sap the foundations of the government. So the empire and all the officers of the empire, from highest to lowest, declared war to the knife on the Galilean; and the war was a personal matter with each one of innumerable dependants on government service throughout the whole empire.

The Pagan priesthood formed a very numerous and powerful body hostile to the new faith. They, with their dependents and devotees, might be said to constitute the entire population; and each one had all the holy

and all the sordid feelings of his nature enlisted against the innovation.

The learned men of the time were of course interested in maintaining their ascendancy and the character of their wisdom.

The ignorant were interested by their religious feelings.

In a word, all the interests of society, of rulers and ruled, of learned and unlearned, of priest and politician, of nobles and tradesmen, were arrayed against the innovators.

And with what were these simple men of Galilee to overcome the vast aggregate of these seemingly insurmountable obstacles?

Infidels say the doctrines of Christianity are unreasonable. The Trinity, the Incarnation, the Atonement, the Second Coming of Christ to judge the world, they say are absurdities. For the argument let it be so. Then these twelve men of Galilee had to transform the world by making it adopt absurd dogmas. They did transform the world by what they preached. Is not the finger of God here? *Journal de la Bible*

Again: The morality of Christ's religion is not pleasing to the natural heart. Men, who follow the bent of their inclinations do not run after opportunities for practicing self-denial,

temperance, chastity, poverty. Yet the twelve fishermen converted the world to the morality of the Cross. Is not the finger of God here?

The argument may be summed up in the following syllogism :

The conversion of the world to Christianity was an effect to which no human causes bear any proportion;

But that effect was actually produced;

Therefore God wrought it; or,

Therefore Jesus Christ is God.

To consider special arguments against the conclusion thus demonstrated is almost useless. For, the core of all the objections against the Divinity of Christ is, *an unwillingness to believe on any testimony, and for any reason.*

The unwillingness is not so much an objection to CHRIST'S Divinity, as to ANY DIVINITY WHATEVER being concerned in the affairs of men. Protestantism, as an intellectual movement — "the denial of authority," as Guizot called it — is fast reaching its logical level, the denial of God's government of the world. This is evident, not merely from the theories and speculations of avowed infidels, but also from the writings and conduct of those calling themselves Christian teachers. I say not this in vituperation of preachers, but as an undeniable

fact. The preachers, like those upon whom the tower of Siloam fell, are not specimens of extraordinary depravity. They have adopted their profession, and have their theological principles furnished them, which have no logical connection with God or the eternal world: and so they preach what they happen to be interested in, and call it religion; they address their congregations with closed eyes, and call it prayer. God is not talked of in their houses of worship; His rights are not insisted on; His excellencies are not set forth, but man's. Sermons are but summaries of the news, or views of "the situation," and prayers little else than the statements of political platforms.

What dictates this course of action but the profound, though unacknowledged conviction, that Religion is no reality, no revelation of the Living God, but only a sentiment of the people? That it is not something to kneel to, to learn from and live by, but something that may be lawfully modified, cut down, increased or rejected altogether, according to the drift of public feeling?

The men of the present age do not *want Christ to be God*, confused, as their minds are, with a mixture of truth and error. He is, to them, the type of the old order of things, of

fixed belief, of humility, self-denial, and patient waiting for Eternity, while they have a phantom, of progress, revolution, development, and spontaneous felicity, to allure them; and feeling that their choice is to make one of these live and the other die, they say, with the Jews of old, "Not this one, but Barabbas."

This remark is to be understood of those men on whose minds the principles of Protestantism exercise a controlling interest. The great mass of Americans, and indeed of all using the English language, are nearly free from any such influence, and are, as far as Religion is concerned, in a state of nature. Protestantism can not well be taught where there are no monasteries to rob, no vows of chastity to escape from, no church revenues to seize on, as stimulants to study, and so our common people are simply without faith, and often yearning to believe. They have no objection to Christ's Divinity, only such as their leaders suggest; and their leaders suggest whatever will serve as a pretext for rejecting it.

The more of these objections one considers, the more manifest will this appear.

"It is not possible," is one of them, "Christ can not be God."

But what is true is possible. Now, Jesus

Christ, who is worthy of belief, has said that He is God. Therefore it is possible, and Christ *can* be God. "But then, if so, the same person is creator and created, mortal and immortal, passible and impassible, a creature of contradictions." No. But a Person of two Natures, in one of which he is divine and in the other human; which presupposed, there is no contradiction at all.

But how can a person be at the same time divine and human? The *Personality* is not at the same time divine and human, but divine: having a divine and human nature.

How could the human nature be without its personality? The human nature is not without its personality; but its personality is, from the beginning of its existence, the Son of God.

Yet it is not possible, because we can not see how it can be.

Did you ever reject a proposition that you wanted to believe for the reason that you can not see how it can be?

You did not know until you studied chemistry and physiology — and then your knowledge amounts to little more than verbiage — *how* food nourishes; yet you accepted the proposition and acted upon it. You do not know, now, *how* grass grows; yet you believe it. You

do not know how one portion of Asia came to be called China; yet you believe it. You do not know how the leader of the Revolutionary armies happened to be Washington; yet you believe it. The man who invented that principle that nothing is to be believed until it is explained, had barely wit enough to need more; for how can you put forth any explanation of any phenomenon, that will not itself need to be explained, until you get back to God, the Primal Truth?

Your astronomers explain the seasons: "The obliquity of the two planes of the equator and the ecliptic varies the angle at which the rays of the sun strike the earth's surface." Exactly: But *why* should this angular variation produce that effect? "Because nature is so constituted," you answer. Well, then, ask me why there are three Persons and one Substance in God; why Jesus Christ is both God and man; why the Redeemer's Body and Blood are in the SACRAMENT; why Baptism cleanses from sin: and I answer, with your own formula, "Because it has been so constituted." Whoever has sense enough to wish to understand what lies about him, should have enough to see that he can not understand all that lies about him.

"Then I must give up my reason," you say.

No, you must not give up your reason — no jot or tittle of it; but you must give up your ridiculous pretense of being able to comprehend every thing; you must yield this point — that God can tell you some things you did not know before.

When, in your childhood, you sat and listened, rapt and wondering to the man who told you of far off lands, of customs that you could not understand, or of deeds in times gone by, you believed what he said without surrendering your reason. So, when God, to whom the mightiest of us is less than a child, deigns to discourse to us of the far off lands on high, of His own incomprehensible nature, and wonderful works, we listen and believe; and our reason is enlightened not destroyed. The fondest believer in old wife's fables never made so gross a surrender of his judgment, as the man who refuses to be taught of God, lest his reason be enthralled.

It is very true that I do not comprehend the mystery of the Incarnation; but it is not necessary for me to comprehend it provided I believe it to be so. I do not see *how* God could be made man; but I need not see *how*, as I have not to do it. It is sufficient for me that the Author of it knew *how* to do it. I do not

see how that fountain gushed up, in the spot I reached travel-worn and thirsty; but I will quench my thirst there, nevertheless.

"But," says the unbeliever, "mysteries are contradictions, and to believe a contradiction is to give up reason."

Every proposition is the assertion (or negation—it matters not which—as far as this explanation is concerned), of identity between a subject and a predicate. Where you can analyze the subject, and thus see its identity with the predicate, you are said to comprehend the proposition. Thus, that a whole is greater than any one of its parts, you can infer from the conception of *wholeness*. But where you do not know enough of the subject to analyze it, you can only find out that the given predicate belongs to it by being told so — on authority. Thus, all you know about it *a priori*, is; Napoleon I. might have crossed the Alps; but, from history, you know he did cross them. So of God, you know, by analysis, that He is all-wise, all-powerful, infinitely good, etc.; but you do not know any more. You do not know how many persons there are in Him, nor how He made and redeemed the world. On these points you must submit to be informed by Him. These are mysteries.

A mystery is a proposition; the identity of whose predicate and subject has to be evident on authority. There are innumerable such in five dollars worth of newspapers, not one of which you reject because you can not see the *how* of it.

But if you do not reject the statements of men because you do not see how they can be true, *a fortiori* you have no logical right to reject the statements of God. The objections, therefore, are futile, and the truth stands.

PART II.

INFERENCES.

CHAPTER I.

ALL THAT JESUS CHRIST TAUGHT IS TRUE.

God is truth itself. If He could fail to be true He would cease to be Himself. Jesus Christ, therefore, being God can speak nothing but truth.

For many years past it has been customary to speak of "religious opinions;" and the effort to unite the wrangling and numberless sects of Protestants has somewhat recently brought forth the absurd distinction between "the essentials" and "non-essentials of Christian doctrine."

Now, of right, there can be no such thing as "religious opinions" among Christians; for, "opinion" is a judgment that something is probable, but admits the possible truth of its contradictory. It can not exist where there is

certainty. It is not my "opinion" that what I see close by me is white, or black, or red: I know its color by sight. Knowledge excludes opinion. But when God teaches we know His teaching is true: that is, the Religion revealed by Jesus Christ is certain; therefore there is no room for opinion in Religion. Either Jesus Christ taught it or, He did not. If not, it is no religious matter, and any opinion concerning it is not a religious opinion; if He did, it must be true, and the opposite necessarily false.

Faith is not opinion. It is the assent of the understanding to the teaching of God; and whoever doubts in a matter of faith doubts the veracity of God. But to call one's faith "opinion" is to admit that it may be false; therefore, of right, there can be no such thing as religious opinions among Christians.

It is true that modern society extols toleration of religious opinions, even if it does not always practice it; and that good men and sound theologians of the Catholic Church, nay, even the Church authorities, have acquiesced in both the practice and the theory.

Catholics and Protestants and infidels have learned to live in the same community without persecuting each other for opinion's sake. This is well. But one may concede and advocate toleration, without believing that all reli-

gions are equal before God. Toleration is proper, not because it is as safe and as sensible to doubt Jesus Christ as to believe in Him; but because it is not for human tribunals to judge and punish the sin of doubting. When I say to my neighbor, "Believe as you please," I do not mean "You can not believe a lie," but only "If you do believe a lie it is your own affair."

The Italian Revolutionists have been trying, for a long time, to extort, from the Vicar of Christ, an admission that heresy is no sin: and he has, again and again, been compelled to condemn their error, under the name of toleration. His meaning never was — as some misbelievers wickedly distort it — that it is wrong to leave heretics unflayed; but only, that in rejecting the teaching of Christ, men, whether rulers or subjects, commit sin. But it is one thing to say that a man does wrong, and another to say that any other man has a right to punish him for it. Thoughts of lust and avarice and ambition are wrong; but no human tribunal has the ability or the right to judge and punish them. In like manner, thoughts and words of unbelief are wrong; but God only is their Judge and Avenger. No man can, without sin, reject the teaching of Christ. "He that believeth not shall be con-

demned;" but the Sovereign Judge must condemn him.

The sin of unbelief does not consist in rejecting all the doctrines of Christianity, but in rejecting any one of them. It consists not in saying, "I do not believe this dogma or that dogma;" but in saying, "I will not believe in Christ." In this matter, what is said of the law is emphatically true: he that offendeth in one is guilty of all. If you reject any part of Christ's teaching you thereby reject His authority, and retain what part you retain, not on His account, but on your own. Hence, those who make selections from the dogmas of Christianity can not properly be called Christians. Therefore, the distinction between the essentials and non-essentials of Christianity is absurd. The great act that makes one a Christian, is submission to Christ and worship of Him; but whoever believes some of Christ's doctrines, and rejects others, assumes not to be a worshiper, but a patron. If a doctrine was taught by Christ it can not but be "essential." If it was not taught by Him it is not Christianity.

It is very proper to distinguish between what is Christianity and what is not. But, in Christianity there is no such thing as essential and non-essential.

Something illustrating this view occurred during the lifetime of the Redeemer, and is recorded in the sixth chapter of the Gospel according to St. John. When he had said, again and again, that to eat His Flesh was necessary to salvation, many, who had been with Him up to that point, unable to believe the doctrine of the Eucharist, "went back and walked no more with Him." They understood the practical matter correctly. They were no longer to stand among His Disciples, when they would not receive all His teaching. Then He turned to the twelve, and said "Will ye also go away?" And Simon Peter answering, said, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life;" as if he had said, "Lord, we understand not how Thy words are to be fulfilled; but we know Thou hast said them. We comprehend not Thy teaching; but we adore the teacher. Thou hast the words of eternal life. We believe all Thou sayst, awaiting thine own good time to understand it."

This is so plain a matter that it is a marvel how the enlightened men of our age and country came to overlook it. All that Jesus Christ taught is true; therefore, whoever does not receive all of Christ's teachings is no Christian; therefore, whoever tries to measure Christian doctrine by his reason, beyond employing his

reason on the question of fact — did Christ teach it or not? — by that very fact rejects the authority of Christ, and is no Christian. People have a right to call themselves rationalists if they choose; but they have no right to call themselves Christians at the same time. A rationalist is one who rejects all teaching, and makes his reason the judge of all teachers. A Christian, on the other hand, is one who submits to the teaching of Christ. One can not be both at the same time.

According to this test, which of the multitudinous sects that disfigure modern civilization has the right to be called Christian?

Certainly none of those who are avowedly rationalistic. The sects of Germany and France, which, while making Jesus Christ an impostor, still speak of Him with insulting affectation of sentimental respect; the sensationists of England, New and Old, who, tired out with denying His Divinity, the Atonement, and the endless punishment of sin, have turned their attention to the novelties that used to belong to gossips and politicians; the thousand and one sects which insist upon only one doctrine — a change in the sensibilities — as if Jesus Christ had taught no other: these are all among those who have turned back and walk no more with Jesus; and it would be

logic in them, and a blessing to the million who think Christianity to be the unreasonable jumble they make it to be, if they would throw off the mask and call themselves Christians no more. They may be learned men, shrewd men, rich men, influential politicians, numerous voters ; but they are not disciples of Christ, because they do not accept all that He teaches, and therefore do not accept Him.

This country numbers, now, far more unbelievers than believers ; and the revolt of the intellect has been, not against Christianity, but against the travesties of Christianity that have gained vogue among those who rejected the teaching of the Church since the unhappy period of the "Reformation." One brought up in anti-Catholic prejudice, taught to hold as unquestionable that Protestantism is Christianity, can hardly be blamed for becoming infidel. If the cold formalism, and worldly pride, and contradictory doctrines of Episcopalianism, or the dark tenets of Calvinism, or the unreasoning sensualism of Methodism, were all Christianity, what inducement would there be to be a Christian ? What wonder is it that all through the United States the churches are vacant ; and the lecture-rooms, concert-halls, and theaters are full ? The infidelity of America has nothing in it of the guilt which be-

longs to infidelity in lands where the true Religion is taught. It is not the out-growth of perversity so much as the revolt of reason against the inconsistency of false teaching; and the Redeemer of souls, looking around upon the spiritual ruin of so many in this land, has a right to say, "With these I have been wounded, in the house of those who (ought to have) loved me."

CHAPTER II.

THE SYSTEM REVEALED BY JESUS CHRIST COULD NOT FAIL OR
BECOME OBSOLETE.

The Son of God becoming man, had a design to accomplish, which of course could not be thwarted. "I come," said He, "that they might have life, and have it more abundantly," meaning all men. Therefore, he had to expiate sin, to prepare the grace of adoption and healing, and make known to all men the terms and means of salvation. To say that He failed to accomplish these ends is to say that He was not God. He knew what was in man. He knew precisely what He had to effect, and the means whereby He would effect it. He knew all the phases of opposition He would encounter, and prepared all the agencies that would overcome it. His object was to give a fair offer of salvation to all men. Therefore, first of all, He had to teach all men, or to provide some way by which they would be taught the truth.

If He failed, in this His design would be

frustrated, and His Divinity, of course, appear a false pretense.

Yet, strange as it may appear, the vast body of English and American Protestants, with all their logic and acuteness of mind, overlook the fact, that the very basis of their belief is an assertion of the failure of the mission of Jesus Christ, "The whole world has been drowned in damnable idolatry for eight hundred years" before the writing of the Book of Homilies.

The whole earth had been corrupted by the man of Sin, when Luther, who ought not to have been a man of sin, arose in a monastery of Saxony.

Now, if this, and similar things asserted by Calvin, Zwinglius, Cranmer, and Knox, means any thing at all, it means that Jesus Christ's plan for teaching His Religion failed and left the world without the means of salvation for at least eight hundred years; that is to say, Protestantism has no meaning, unless on the hypothesis that Jesus Christ was unable to foresee the perversity of men, and unable to provide against the multitude of false teachers.

Going away from earth, He left a Hierarchy to teach in His name. He promised to be with them in their teaching all days, to send the Holy Ghost to teach them all truth; yet, if there is truth in Protestantism He was with

them scarcely three centuries. The Holy Ghost allowed them to run into the most horrible errors, and every thing went wrong for ages, until a foul-mouthed friar in Saxony, an impure lawyer in Geneva, a licentious king in England, arose to set things to rights and restore the pure religion !

No wonder that youth nurtured in Protestantism speedily learn to deny that Jesus Christ is God ! For how can He be God, whose works failed so signally, whose plan for teaching men was thwarted almost ere it had been tried ?

Let no one think so unworthily of the Son of God. He is true, though every man be held a liar. It may be unpleasant to believe that the entire movement in the religious world, since the XVI. century, has been a vast delusion of diabolical origin ; but it is better to believe that than to doubt the Divinity of Jesus Christ. Men have failed before to-day, nations have apostatized and sunk into brutish idolatry ; but God never failed and never will fail. Jesus Christ is God. Let us rather cling to Him than to those who say that He was defeated in His intention of teaching the world the truth. Nor can any teaching of Jesus Christ grow obsolete, or His plan of salvation give place to any other for ever.

Sometimes we find people willing to concede

that Jesus Christ was the Prophet of His age ; but adding, that what He taught has now done its work, and had its day, and should no more be insisted on. But if He is God, as we have demonstrated, then what He taught had no particular day, but was for all time. Since He was on earth nothing can have happened in science or art, or discovery or invention which He did not foresee, and, as far as was necessary, provide for. If there were, then He was not God. It is true, that since His ascension into Heaven many changes have been wrought in the scientific, literary, and political world ; but none that supersedes the necessity of Grace and Faith. Men fight, now, with cannon ; ride on rail-cars ; light their houses, of nights, with gas ; and send messages by electric telegraph, but they need a Redeemer all the same now as in the generations gone by. After studying chemistry, astronomy, geology, and as many other sciences as exist, one still needs a teacher in Religion, the forgiveness of sins, and grace to resist temptation. It is still true, even in this age of enlightenment and progress, that the soul that sinneth shall die, and that no man can see salvation except through the grace of Christ.

No motion can be out of the track of the forces that create it. No progress of society

can go beyond the sphere in which society moves. Let the dreams of the most exalted among the Progressists be realized, let the poor man vote, have a comfortable share of the world's goods, and enjoy brotherhood with those who are called great. What then? Death remains, and Judgment, and God the avenger of wrong. Original sin will still stain the soul and cry for baptism; actual guilt will still demand confession and sacramental absolution; there will still be the same need of Christ as now. Neither He, nor any thing He taught is ever destined to become obsolete.

Nothing shows more powerfully forth, how little is the greatest human knowledge, than this very cry, "Christianity has had its day," uttered by men who imagine themselves standing in the vanguard of human progress. The very ideas which they call advanced, are, for the most part, borrowed from Christianity, as far as they are good; and distorted from their original intention, as far as bad. One of these, which now awakens much enthusiasm and even strife, is the dream of the Universal Republic. What is there of beauty in this dream, but the equality of Jew and Gentile, Greek and barbarian, bond and free, proclaimed by Jesus Christ, enforced by Catholic discipline, and to be fully realized when Justice and Truth shall

gain supremacy in the day of Final Judgment? And what is there of evil and disorganizing in this project, but the eager effort to realize it before the time, as though all good will elude us that we do not snatch on this side of the grave?

Another idea, which has been borrowed from Christianity, and distorted into travesty, is the one about ennobling women. The Church, which honors Mary Immaculate, never sanctioned the degradation of the female sex. Reformers have only taken her principle — women ought to be ennobled — and tacking on to it their own groveling ideas of nobility, have set women to delivering public lectures, carrying canes, and wearing breeches.

In like manner, the love of freedom, which so many now-a-days have adopted as their religion, is but a travesty of that love of liberty breathed into every baptized soul by the Spirit of God. In the Christian sense, Freedom means Truth for the understanding, Justice for the will, Innocence for the soul, and Heaven for its reward. Those who narrow down freedom to make it mean only freedom from political shackles, do not thereby outstrip Christianity in progress but only distort and caricature it.

The world has changed a great deal since

Christianity was a novelty, but Christianity has not grown obsolete. Changes will doubtless continue; but society will never change, so far as not to need a Redeemer. Jesus Christ will always, be to each new generation, and to each freshly created soul, "The way, the truth, and the life," until the time comes when no more new souls will be created for ever.

CHAPTER III.

THE AUTHORITY HE SET UP BINDS ALL MEN.

Jesus Christ came from Heaven with a message of good to all peoples. He came to set up a kingdom in this world. He came to fulfill, and at the same time abolish, the Jewish Law; to set up a new Priesthood instead of that of Aaron; to subject to Himself every principedom and power; to rule from shore to shore and to remotest time. The history of His life tells how He founded His kingdom. He made Peter its chief, and the other Apostles princes under him. He told them that their organization was to last till the end of time, and to rule over every nation. "Go into all the world," He said, giving them their commission, "and preach the Gospel to every creature;"* and before they could ask, With what authority? He added, "He that believeth not shall be condemned." And that they might understand how such authority was given to men, He added still farther, "Lo! I am with you all

days, even to the consummation of the world." The Apostolate, therefore, was to represent the Person, and carry with it the authority, of Jesus Christ. Through it He was to teach, and through it reign over, the world. Therefore, its authority was to bind all men; therefore its authority binds the consciences of all men now.

Is not Jesus Christ possessed of "all power in Heaven and on earth?" Is He not "King of kings and Lord of lords." Then His authority is absolute, no matter where it is lodged. But He has lodged it in His Church; therefore His Church has a right to the obedience of every understanding and of every will.

The theory, "Every one has a right to believe what he pleases," which is true when it means, "No man has the right to dictate his belief to another," is widely accepted in the sense that, no man is responsible for what he believes, or that there is no connection between belief and practice. But in this latter sense it is very far from being true. No one has the right to believe what is false, any more than he has the right to do what is wrong. Nor can it be said that no one can help his convictions, and there can be no responsibility where there is no freedom; for, though it is true that no one can say, to his understanding, "believe,"

at will, yet every one can regulate his understanding as to what subjects it shall reflect upon and attend to, and thus indirectly dictate what it shall believe. Therefore is every one accountable to God for his belief. Hence no one is free, in conscience, to be of what religion he choose. The son of God came down from Heaven to be our teacher; therefore we must listen to what He says. If one does not know where to hear Him he must seek in singleness and sincerity of heart until he finds. For this, understanding was bestowed upon us that we might think upon our ways, and direct our steps in the law of the Lord.

Moreover, this responsibility is the most important and far-reaching of all that rest upon us. As the light of the body is the eye, so the intention is what guides all the thoughts, words, and deeds of life. But the intention depends upon the belief. We will always aim at what we believe is going to satisfy our desires. Therefore our belief guides our aims and rules our life, and is of as much consequence as our eternal happiness or misery.

Let no one say, then, "it matters not what a man believes, so that his life be good;" for his life can not be wholly good unless his faith be wholly right. He may live so as to escape

moral censure; he may do many acts of virtue; but he can not be blameless in the sight of God.

You have not a right to be Methodist, or Baptist, or Episcopalian, or Universalist, as you please; although no merely human tribunal can prevent you. There is a teacher set up on the earth, whom you are bound to seek and to submit to. The Apostolate, established by Jesus Christ, still lives upon the earth; and you must learn the truth from it if you wish to do what is right. And in learning from it you must have a docile, tractable, humble spirit. You are not to conceive, beforehand, what ought to be taught. You are not to divide the truth and say so much I will receive and so much reject. You are not to cavil at the teacher, and pretend to understand the message better than the messenger. Outside of that teacher you have no knowledge whatever — neither Scripture, nor tradition, nor reason in the mysteries to be revealed. You do not know how many, or what are the Sacraments; whether there is a Purgatory or no; whether Mary should be honored or prayed to or not; whether there are three persons or one in God. You do not know how to pray, how to pay worship to God, how to honor the Angels and Saints, how to fast or feast, with-

out her intervention. You must become as a little child, waiting to learn and ready to obey. "He that believeth shall be saved."

Sometimes Catholics are asked, Why does your Church teach so and so? Why? We do not know or control what she is going to teach. She had been teaching for eighteen hundred years before we were born, and never consulted us about what she should teach; and we came to her—we came, not to modify her teaching or shake her policy, but only to learn, obey, and to save our souls. She is to us what we present her to others, the Representative of Christ, the Infallible Teacher of Truth, the Final Judge on earth of all religious controversies.

There are some, again, who pronounce her claims absurd, on the ground that the Hierarchy is but a body of men, and can not be infallible. But this difficulty is not to the point. What the instrument that Jesus Christ chose as His means of teaching, was before He chose it is neither here nor there; the only question is, Did He choose it? After the choice was made, though the instrument were a "tinkling cymbal," the infallibility is secure.

The Catholic Church living, through her organization, an imperishable life, claims to possess authority to teach and legislate in the

name of Jesus Christ. On what ground will you dispute her claims? From Scripture? You have no Scripture that you do not get from her. Reason? Reason is to be instructed, and therefore can not be judge. There are *no* logical grounds on which any one, admitting the Divinity of Jesus Christ, can escape submitting to the teaching of His Church. Her authority is binding on all.

And as the understanding is obliged to submit to her teaching of dogma, so must the will yield obedience to her legislation in what belongs to morality. "So the Church decrees," is a principle as final for action, as "So the Church teaches," is for belief. Her laws always aim at spiritual good, and can not be resisted without sin, whether regulating public worship, the administration of the Sacraments, the observance of Fasts, the education of the youth, or whatever else in the spiritual order.

Do you say that Catholic rulers have disregarded them and do disregard them? Well; Catholic rulers may do wrong and perish. A moral obligation is not proved to have no existence by being disregarded. The tower of Siloam does not fall upon every one that does evil; but the justice of God will track and

overtake them at last. Careless Catholics may neglect the abstinences and fasts of the Church; but in so doing they add sin to sin against the Day of Wrath.

How grievous are the sins of heresy and schism, appears from this, that they are both direct rebellion against God. "He that hears you hears Me," said the Redeemer to His Apostles, "and he that despises you despises Me."* Every crime is an implied rebellion, in which the wrong-doer prefers his own satisfaction to the service of God. But heresy, a direct refusal to believe Jesus Christ; and schism, an open defiance of His authority; — are direct and formal rebellion, and therefore sins of the most heinous nature.

I do not mean that all born in heresy or schism have, on their souls, all the guilt which these names imply; but those lapsing, of their own free will, into them, or those remaining in them, contrary to light and knowledge, are undoubtedly to be ranked among the most grievous offenders.

It has become the fashion, of late years, to speak of the Church as decaying, and of her laws as not being regarded among enlightened men. A school of politicians has got the upper hand in modern society, whose highest aim is utility. These speak and legislate as

* Luke x. 16.

though the ruler of a nation ought to recognize no distinction between truth and falsehood, right and wrong, justice and injustice. The Church has lately spoken and condemned their errors, denying the right of king or people to do wrong. The politicians disregard her condemnation; not because they have the right to do so, but because they have the power. Time will show whether the authority of the Church can be slighted with impunity by either princes or people.

7

CHAPTER IV.

THERE IS NO OTHER NAME UNDER HEAVEN, GIVEN AMONG
MEN WHEREBY WE MAY BE SAVED, BUT ONLY THE NAME
OF JESUS. ACTS, IV: 12

This is our fourth plain inference from the demonstrated truth, Jesus Christ is God.

The very fact of God undertaking a work in person, is emphatic proof that no other is to do it. In fact, it is very hard to see how any other could do it; for the work of our salvation was not a trifling work. We had declared ourselves enemies of God, and defied Him; we had forfeited innocence and grace and eternal life, and given ourselves over slaves to the enemy of God and of our souls. We had, therefore, to be bought with a price, our sin had to be atoned for, our lost innocence repurchased. But no creature could atone for sin: first, because no creature could offer to God any thing not His already; and second, because sin being, in some sort, infinite in malice, needs an infinite expiation. Jesus Christ, who in His Humanity had something to offer

to which His Divine Person gave infinite excellence, was alone the worthy Expiator; and as He alone could expiate, so He alone could reconcile us, restore our lost graces, and put us in the way of regaining our forfeited beatitude; therefore He became the "One Mediator," through whom alone we have access to God, and hope of Heaven. For aught we know, He may have effected many other ends by means of His Incarnation. But as the sunlight is all the light to us, though it illuminate other worlds beside ours, so He is the sole light of our souls, though He may be the same to innumerable others. Salvation does not come from nature. The soul does not gravitate toward Heaven as a body to its center. True, the soul desires God with exceeding eagerness; but naturally it is held down by the flesh, to confound its desire for God with its appetite for present satisfaction.

A man may do no violence to himself, may never forfeit his own self-respect, and yet go straight to destruction. If he would be saved he must turn away from what is present and visible, and set his heart on what is future and unseen. But he can not do this without the gift of God through Jesus Christ. Without Jesus Christ he can have no faith in the future and unseen. He may dream dreams about it,

and even recommend it to others; but he can not have earnest, undoubting, practical faith in it without the grace of Christ. And even had he faith, he could not without grace, lift his thoughts and aims and affections practically up to the level of his convictions. As the vine gives life to the branches, so Jesus Christ gives His life to every operation of virtue, and without Him we can not even as much as think a thought toward salvation.

"If I be lifted up from the earth," said He, "I will draw all things unto Me." That is, on the Cross I will become the standard and measure of all excellence, so that what is like Me will be approved, and what is unlike Me shall be condemned. Hence, St. Paul, who was honorably born, well educated, very wise, very eloquent, much beloved of the people, and a favorite of God, found nothing to glory in but the Cross of Christ. His wisdom was to know Christ crucified; his honor was to share the Redeemer's contumely; his joy to bear always the mortifications of Jesus in his body.

In this spirit the Church knows only Christ crucified in her Offices and Liturgy. Every favor that she asks from God she asks in His name. Public worship is always opened and closed with the sign of the Cross. No Sacrament is administered, no rite performed with-

out it. It is fastened on the tops of spires, carved on chalices, painted on walls, worked into sacred vestments and altar linen. She directs her children to guard themselves with it at the beginning of every undertaking, and with it to give thanks at its close. They must make it when they eat, when they sleep, when they go out, when they come in, when they work, when they play: in "whatever they do, by word, or work, they must do all in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ."* He has "drawn all things unto Himself." He is the sole Saviour. Out of Him there is no knowledge that enlightens, no love that is lasting, no hope that is not vain. Men are born aliens from the grace of God, and they make themselves still stranger to Him by their actual sins. Without a Reconciler they would remain for ever alien from Him, and from happiness, enveloped forever in measureless evil.

If the lakes, and rivers, and springs, and wells on earth were, all but one, dried up, what a stream of travel, from every point of the compass, would be seen hurrying up hill and down dale, over mountain and over moor, on towards that one fountain! Spiritually, the earth is a parched desert that has no water for the soul. Jesus Christ is the sole

* Coloss. iii. 17.

Fountain of Life dropped down like dew from Heaven. Science, art, what genius can achieve in ruling men, fame, power, pleasure — these are “broken cisterns that can not hold water,” and leave the soul that has searched through them wearied and unrefreshed at the threshold of Eternity. Jesus Christ is the sole Saviour. “There is no other name among men whereby we may be saved.” The *Name* of Jesus Christ means His *Power*. There is no power that can save us but His. Where is His power exerted? Where shall we seek, to have it applied to us? Evidently where He was pleased it should be exercised. That is to say, we can not make a religion of our own, and say, God must save us thus; but we must seek the Religion that He made, and be saved on His terms. There is no use in calling this plain inference from the Divinity of Jesus Christ, this emphatic declaration of the Apostle (Acts vi), bigotry and narrow-mindedness. It is not bigotry, for it is truth. It is not narrow-mindedness, for it is common sense. There is no way of salvation but Christ’s way. There may be other ways of making a sect, of leading followers, of causing sensations, of making a fortune; but there is no other way of salvation.

There is no use in getting angry with one

who states this truth; for he merely states it — he did not make it. Do not ask him to be more liberal in his views; because he has a right to be liberal only with what is his own. There is no liberality in lying about the teaching of Religion and common sense. If Christ's way of salvation is the only way there is no liberality in saying that it is not the only way; it is mere lying, from which no good can come.

But what is Christ's way of salvation?

It must be still upon the earth; for it could not fail or grow obsolete. Reader, did you ever try to find it? Do you love your salvation well enough to accept it, no matter where you find it? Are you willing to be taught of God, let Him teach what He will? Will you listen, and say "Speak, Lord, for Thy servant heareth," though He should convict you of ignorance, and error, and sin? If so, you will not be long in finding the Teacher that represents Christ on earth. It can not be any of the Protestant churches; for they were never heard of until fourteen hundred years after Jesus Christ had ascended to Heaven. Whoever heard of Lutherans before Luther, or Calvinists before Calvin, or of Anglicans before Henry VIII.? Therefore they are not Christ's way.

It can not be any of the Rationalistic sects; for they expressly repudiate every teacher, and spin their theory of salvation out of their own caprice and fancy.

It is the Catholic Church. The Pope of Rome and those subject to him are the body to which Christ gave the commission, "Preach the Gospel to every creature." That body has been a living organization ever since those words were uttered, doing the same office, exercising the same authority, encountering the same opposition. Read history, and see if it is not the society founded by Jesus Christ?

What society was warred upon by pagan Rome for three long centuries? Was it not the society founded by THE GALILEAN? and, in the same breath, was it not the society of which the Bishop of Rome was the head?

What society fled to the Catacombs, and from thence struggled patiently till idolatry was overthrown; then preserved the Empire; then subdued the barbarians, checked the power of Mahometanism, and prepared the way for all that is healthy in modern civilization? Was it not the Christian; and was not the Pope of Rome its head?

What body gathered the books of Scripture, determined which were inspired, and which not, as early as the fourth century? Was it

not the Christian Church ; and did it not own, for chief, the Roman Pontiff?

What are the countless sects over Germany, England, and America, but decaying branches cut off from the true vine, out of which there is no sap of life? They do not pretend to have been founded by Christ. The most they pretend is, that they found out His doctrine fifteen hundred years after He had commissioned the Church to teach it — a pretension too absurd to merit discussion.

It is an historical fact, that Christianity and Catholicity are identical. The Catholic Church, therefore, is the way of salvation appointed by Jesus Christ — the only way of salvation.

Many, now-a-days, waive the question of eternal salvation, and devote their energies to seeking material prosperity, national wealth, liberty outside of Christ ; and even rulers, professing themselves Catholic, have affected to discover that, in promoting the temporal welfare of society Christianity must be disregarded. Suppose we concede that Religion must be treated as a fable to secure temporal prosperity ; then the question naturally arises, Is temporal prosperity worth such a price? Can one afford to lose his soul to save his body? Or is it worth while to save his body to-day and have it cast into hell to-morrow?

If you must prohibit the public worship of God, the observance of Festivals, the teaching of Catechism, the inculcation of piety, in order to make your people hardy and enterprising, would it not be better to let them remain inactive and be behind the age?

But it is not true that there is any real prosperity, or desirable wealth, or true liberty that the Church keeps from her obedient children. Jesus Christ is the sole Saviour in the temporal order also.

For, what is Salvation in the temporal order but Liberty, Equality, Fraternity?

Liberty, untrammelled, yet never becoming licence; Equality, that says, "My neighbor is as good as I, and therefore I will treat him tenderly;" Fraternity, that recognizes the true brotherhood of our race—never seeking to domineer, but rather to minister.

These you can not have out of Christ.

It is vain to hope for progress to evolve them, or for forms of government to secure them. What is born of the flesh is flesh, in whatever age, or under whatever form of government it spring up. Conscience alone can secure the rich, justice, or the poor, mercy.

In our country, lately, we have secured the manumission of five million slaves. This is a grand event a mighty blessing. But have we

forthwith found, therein, our temporal salvation? Alas, no. There are still wrongs and miseries in society, even under the shadow of the starry banner.

The penitentiaries are crowded; the jails are full; gambling houses and drinking shops are flourishing; the hovels and garrets are thronged; beggars meet you on the highway; thousands are growing richer; but millions are growing poorer. Do you call that salvation? You can not legislate people into prosperity; nor, finding them prosperous, can you legislate them into honesty.

Oh! but the schools — when every body can read and write. Education is good; even the barren knowledge of reading, writing, and arithmetic is better than no knowledge at all; but education will but give edge and power to passion, unless it furnish a motive for controlling it. But there is no motive for controlling passion outside of faith. If to eat and drink, and accumulate and domineer is all men need; if death is the end of existence, and there is no judgment beyond, why should I restrain any lust, or anger, or ambition, or avarice? Why should I not eat, drink, and be merry; why should I not rob and steal and cheat; why should I not domineer and tyrannize where I have the power? If you want me to practice

self-restraint you must show me a motive for it. Tell me I am accountable to God for all I do and say and think, and then I can see a reason for watchfulness and self-control.

So it is with the masses. Teach them to look forward to the Judgment, and you make them moderate and self-restrained. Teach them to expect their happiness beyond the grave, and you make them think lightly of the ills and advantages of life. And so alone can you give any stability to society; any security to wealth; any alleviation to the pangs of poverty. But Jesus Christ is the only one to teach and enforce this. Therefore Jesus Christ is the sole Saviour in the temporal order also.

Let no Catholic, then, be deceived by any good coming to his country outside of religion. There can be none worth striving for. Let the heathen have it, whatever it is, and solace themselves as best they can against the time when their separation from Christ shall become final and eternal.

THOUGHTS

ON THE

PASSION OF JESUS CHRIST.

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THE BETRAYAL AND ARREST OF JESUS.

Jesus Christ could have expiated every sin by a single drop of His sacred Blood. But to satisfy His exceeding love for us, and to manifest His utter abomination of sin, He chose rather to expiate it in detail, paying, as it were, the price of each kind of crime, by a suffering corresponding to it. This will appear to us, more and more, as we go on meditating the History of the Passion.

Considered as an abuse of the gifts of God, all sin is treachery. Of His free gift, God endows us with being, understanding, and free will, and He tells us, as of old He said to Adam: of all that is good and beautiful in the universe you may partake. You may know every truth; love every good: but, if you abuse the understanding I give you, to seek error; if you pervert the will with which I have made you like Myself, to love any good out of its proportion; then you are My enemy, and shall die. After following up in kindness

these gifts of understanding and free will, when He makes us Christians, He discloses to our understanding what truth is, and sets free our will from the bondage of original guilt and concupiscence by the Sacrament of Baptism.

Then, when through natural frailty or inconstancy of mind, we have forgotten that our happiness lies outside the dominions of sense and passion, and have forfeited our innocence through desire of the visible, He restores us to heirship by the sacramental absolution.

Knowing how weak we are, and how easily wrought upon by our terror of the anger or ridicule of our fellows, He strengthens us in this regard by the Sacrament of Confirmation.

To fill us with all grace and sweetness, He trusts us with his own Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity.

Now, our sin consists in treacherously abusing these gifts, as far as in us lies, to the injury of the Giver. We use our wit to thwart His designs; our will to oppose His law, and drag down our character of Christian, and the priceless graces of the Sacraments, into the service of God's enemies. This is why Jesus Christ suffered Himself to be betrayed. Of course He knew, beforehand, what Judas was thinking about, as he sat with averted eyes and scowling brow in the supper-room; and could

easily have prevented his making the journey to the house of the high priest; but He did not wish to do it. He had complained, by the mouth of His prophets, of the hard treatment He received at the hands of men. "I have raised up children," He said, "and they have despised Me."* "If My enemy had done this, and if he who stood up as My foe had spoken so much against Me, I could have borne it. But thou, O man, of one heart with Me! Thou who didst eat bread at one table with Me! "What else could I have done for My vineyard that I did not?" "My people, what have I done to thee, or wherein have I made thee sad?"

But now, in order that we might see with our eyes the treachery of which He complained, behold to what He submits. It was not enough to endure the rancor of the jealous Scribes and Pharisees; the wild fury of the brutal mob. He must be betrayed and sold for a paitry sum of money, by one of His chosen Twelve. "How much will you give me to betray Him to you?" asked the traitor, as if anxious to get some worthless commodity off his hands. Reader, have you ever heard a question like this? Did you ever hear of a Catholic ready to betray his faith, and asking, "What will you give me," among the politi-

cians and men in power? Of one wavering before the commission of some fraud or theft, and calculating what he would get by betraying his conscience? Did you never stand, hesitating between God on one side and the satisfaction of an unlawful desire on the other, asking yourself, "What will I get by yielding to wrong?" If the thought would but go one step further, and the question take this shape, "What can you give me in exchange for my soul?"—sin would never gain dominion over us. "The traitor gave them a sign, saying, 'Whom I shall kiss, the same is He. Hold Him fast.' And, approaching, he said, 'Hail, Rabbi, and he kissed Him.'"

It is hard to be betrayed. The heart that trusts, clings in so many ways to the trusted one that, when cast off suddenly and rudely, it bleeds in many places at once. But to be betrayed by the sign of love is the cruelest of all. Hypocrites betray Jesus Christ with a kiss. False teachers, wolves in sheep's clothing, who preach heresy and calumniate His Church; who seduce souls with a promise of impunity for guilt, betray Jesus Christ with a kiss. Those who affect piety for evil and corrupt motives, betray Jesus with a kiss. But, pre-eminently false and detestable are those who make communion with the guilt of mortal sin

on their souls; who have either concealed something in confession, or have not resolved to fly sin and its occasions, and yet, dare to kneel with the children of God, and to receive into their guilt-blackened souls the Author of Purity.

“Then, they laid hands upon Him and held Him fast.” They conducted His arrest with all manner of insulting rudeness. They seized on Him as if He had been a wild beast, and dragged Him along through the streets. Some from rancor, but more from frolic, labored to give Him pain. It was rare sport for the rowdy boys and uncouth rustics, with whom the city was filled for the Pasch, to caper, and dance, and grimace about Him; to leer on Him and shout ribaldry and pluck His beard; and push, and strike, and trip Him. And it was rare enjoyment for the parasites of the high priest, to encourage them to do it. We who have seen men of their profession fomenting the mob spirit against churches and convents, ought to be able to form some idea of the scene. Here it was, that He was “led as a lamb to the slaughter;” that He was a “worm and no man;” no longer master of His own movements; no longer in possession of that personal dignity which af-

terward appeared so majestically in his mock trial before the high priest and Pilate.

The strongest and subtlest source of sin in the human heart, is precisely that sense of personal dignity, or self-complacency, or self-reliance which the Redeemer permitted to be crushed thus rudely in Himself. It is an element of every sin, for it separates the heart from subjection to God. The true greatness of the human soul is the high estimate God puts on it; the value he puts on it. But pride places its greatness in some kind of importance, not only by comparison with other created beings, but also in the face of God Himself.

Before their fall, Adam and Eve walked fearlessly before God, and spoke freely to Him; because they never dreamed of trying to appear to Him but just as He had made them. But after their sin; after their understanding was darkened, they began to make comparisons, and to consider how they should meet Him, and greet Him, and entertain Him. That is, they no longer annihilated themselves before Him, and adored Him as their absolute and Supreme Master and Owner; but held their own lives inferior it may be, but still divided from His. So it has been ever since with their descendants.

The earliest perversion of the soul's consciousness of greatness is to exempt itself from subjection to God. Sometimes this manifests itself in shocking ways: as in those who worship idols of their own device, and images their own hands have made. At other times it is subtler, as when it corrupts the good works and poisons the humility of the children of God. But wherever it is, it works division between the heart and its Supreme God.

The beginning of all sin is pride. No man lives without his own good opinion. Deprived of one source of self-complacency, he is sure to find another. If he is not talented, he is rich; if he is poor, he is highly born; if he is a criminal, he outwits the world; or if he is stupid, and low-born, and wicked, and miserable, he was not always so, or he is not so much so as others whom he knows. So in virtue: he does not study his defects; but the excellences he has or imagines he has. If he is hard hearted, he is not one of your spendthrifts and drunkards; if he is a blasphemer, he does not steal or rob; if he is impure, he is no hypocrite. Let his conscience convict him of what guilt soever, he finds consolation in some virtue he imagines he has, as an offset against it.

It is this feeling of self-complacency that prevents the heart from turning easily to God

when it is conscious of needing Him. It keeps people standing outside of the Catholic Church years after they are intellectually convinced of her claims to the obedience of their minds and souls. It keeps Christians from going to confession immediately after they have fallen into sin, and deceives them into waiting under the pretext of being better prepared. It prevents sorrow for sin from being genuine and pleasing to God—making it, not regret for offending the good and merciful Father of our souls, but bitterness and mortification at being humbled. It is in reference to this feeling that the disposition to be reconciled to God is called *Contrition*—a word signifying crushing, or grinding to powder, as grain is ground into flour between millstones, or earth to dust on traveled roads. The heart, that is, all the natural inclinations, affections, complacence, must be ground to powder, until nothing is left of their old form, shape, direction and consistency, and they are perfectly soft and pliable, and ready to take the new shape grace is pleased to give them.

“If any man shall come after Me let him deny himself and take up his cross.” If any man should be a friend to God he must adore. He must not come claiming any right, or seeking any treaty, or stipulating, this much he

is willing to concede to, but not that. He must yield all his intellect to God's teaching, his will to God's guiding, his affections to God's control. His whole heart must be contrite. He must have no views, no opinions, no aims, no affections, no thought of any kind, but such as God allows him; and God claims neither the rooting out of his natural affections nor the suspension of his mental operations, but only the control and mastery of them.

Contrition is the root of that "change of mind" (as it is expressed in the Greek Testament) or repentance, without which all shall perish, with those on whom the tower fell in Siloam.

Naturally, man lives in his senses. He satisfies his appetites; takes up with the ideas in vogue about him; gets his notions of fortune and misfortune from what happens the body, and sets himself to live as though life ended in the grave. All these thoughts and aims must be ground out of him by contrition. He must dwell as a stranger and pilgrim on earth, for his home is in Eternity. He must learn not to regard what the body fears or loves for its own sake; but to go right on, without shrinking from sickness or poverty, or censure, or death; or being elated at health,

or abundance, or applause, or promise of long life. He must change as completely as he changes, who from going downward begins to move upward. And this change implies the complete grinding into powder of the sensual heart, its self-complacency and carnal affections; or, as St. Paul calls it, "crucifying the man that once we were, in order to rise again, a new man in Jesus Christ."

Mary Magdalen is the example left us by inspiration to instruct us on this point. Before the Redeemer looked on her with pity, her chief delight had been in sensual enjoyment and vain display of her person and its ornaments. After, she forgot her appetite at the feast, and sat with streaming eyes and disheveled hair in the midst of an assembly she would once have loved to fascinate. But now her mind is so changed on those matters, that the humiliation costs her no effort, and her tears flow because it can be no compensation to Jesus for the licentiousness of her past undisciplined life. Her ambition that had been unbridled, and the warmth of her affection that had been wantonness, had been ground to powder by the grace of Jesus, and not annihilated, but transformed into the fine flour of unfeigned contrition and God-like love.

Jesus Christ, in being dragged through the streets of Jerusalem, suffered the apparent annihilation of His personal dignity, to atone for the obstinacy of our pride. "The Lord," says the prophet, "willed to crush Him in infirmity;" to crush Him, to grind Him to powder in all His outward seeming. Already He had annihilated the semblance of His Divinity in becoming man; the dignity of chief of a sect or school when He was betrayed and His disciples fled; the respect due to a well-meaning man, when he was seized as a felon, and now, as He is dragged and hooted at, He seems to lose the very semblance of manhood, and to become, in the estimation of the people, a wild beast. "The Lord willed to crush Him in infirmity."

My friends, unless we profit by His atonement, and partake of His contrition, we shall perish in the Judgment. The dwellers in Sodom and Gomorrah, and the army of Pharaoh, which the waves buried, were at one time no nearer destruction than we. The fact that history records sins which we never committed is not going to save us. If the general bent of our inclinations and aims is toward earth; if our minds are set on money, and place, and pleasure now, there must be a change or we are lost. The old carnal heart

must be crushed and ground to powder, and a new one must take its place.

Yet, do not imagine that this contrition is to be effected, necessarily, with any tumult of sensible emotions, with noisy groans, and many sighs and tears. It may be done in the higher region of the soul, without any feeling whatever. Tears and smiles come and go, like sunshine and shadows over the surface of the ocean. Convictions are deeper and more abiding, like the waters that lie far down on the pearl beds below. One may be convinced that he has gone wrong, and wasted his life hitherto in trying to quench the thirst of his soul from broken cisterns that hold no water, without any vehement emotion or a single tear. Nay, he can see the truth so clearly, and resolve on a change of life so strongly, as to rejoice rather than weep, thinking rather of what he has found than of what he has lost. But, in every one there must be this change of mind or there is no salvation. Jesus, dragged through the streets by the mob, is our model of contrition. We must be, before God, what He was before men.

Another source of sin to us, is false friendship; and, for this Jesus Christ denies Himself the solace of friendship that is true. "Then, all the Disciples leaving Him, fled

away." There is no greater temporal blessing than a true friend : one who is sincerely virtuous ; one who loves you too well to flatter you, or encourage you in wrong-doing. But such a one is so rare that the poet may well talk of grappling him with hooks of steel. Most friendships in the world are false, and hollow, and corrupting. Young people become friends, because each flatters the other's vanity — too often encourages his vices. In the butchery of souls that is going on in the world about us, all the time, the false friend plays a bloody part. He is the devil's right-hand man in sins of rioting, gambling, drunkenness, and often bloodshed ; in sins of disobedience to parents, frauds, thefts, that are to feed riots, in the nameless and loathesome abominations of impurity ; from the obscene word and wanton look, to the last extremity of brutish corruption. How many lives are wrecked and souls lost, not to seem rude, not to hurt a friend's feelings or forfeit his regard ! This was why Jesus Christ allowed Himself to be deserted by His friends ; "and leaving Him they all fled away,"—some to the right hand, some to the left. They stood by Him in the days of his popularity, and were ostentatiously of His retinue the day when the people strewed palm branches in His path, and shouted, "Blessed

is He who cometh in the name of the Lord." But, now, when the clouds have gathered on Him, "leaving Him, they fled away." There is no trusting any one for a friend who is false to God. The sooner we break with those who have encouraged us to sin, the better for us in every respect. They will soon leave us, if we do not leave them; and our Divine Redeemer, deserted by His disciples, calls upon us, in the most touching accents, to come away from His persecutors and share His desertion with Him.

CHRIST'S AGONY IN THE GARDEN.

36. And Jesus came with them into a garden which is called Gethsemani, and said to His disciples: Sit ye here, while I go yonder and pray.

37. And taking with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, He began to grow sorrowful, and to be very sad.

38. Then He saith to them: My soul is sorrowful even unto death; stay ye here and watch with Me.

39. And He went a little farther, and fell upon His face and prayed, saying: My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass away from Me. Nevertheless, not as I will but as Thou wilt.

40. And He cometh to his disciples and findeth them asleep, and saith to Peter: Lo, could you not watch with Me one hour?

41. Watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation. The spirit, indeed, is willing but the flesh is weak.

42. Again, a second time, he went away and prayed, saying: My Father, if this cup can not pass away except I drink it, Thy will be done.

43. And He cometh again and findeth them sleeping — for their eyes were heavy.

44. And leaving them He went away again and prayed the third time, saying the same words.

This is Saint Matthew's brief history of the Agony in the Garden.

Picture to yourselves the villa, covered with fresh spring grass on which the dew is gathering; here and there a cedar or palm lifting upward its boughs to the calm starry sky: one group of tired men, eight in number, stretched like soldiers, after a day's march, on the ground asleep. A little way off another group of three, between sleeping and waking; and slightly removed from them the Saviour of our souls, "beautiful in form before all the sons of men," lying flat on His face, saying, again and again, "My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass away from Me?" And, still, as the three disciples yield by degrees to their drowsiness; and as the spring breeze rustles among the palm leaves, and as the roar of the distant city murmurs faintly, along from tree to tree. He lies prone on the turf, and repeats, "My

Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass away from Me. Nevertheless, not as I will but as Thou wilt."

Who can define grief, and tell its cause, and take its measure? When you have felt it, you can not tell what it is. Tears are no measure for it; for they never come till it begins to grow lighter. Words can not express it; for the keener the grief the simpler and more terse the words the sufferer uses. We can stand by and look at our Saviour lying on His face; we can see that face grow white with anguish; we can mark the throes of agony that shake His frame, as the storm shakes the branches of the pine tree on the mountain; we can see the red blood bursting through His pores, and tracing a crimson line along His white skin, fall upon the ground. But His grief is as great as the sea—we can not measure it; nor would I pause to dwell on it if he were a stranger thus lying in agony, on whom we had casually stumbled; but He is no stranger. The contemplation of His sorrow is not simply distressing. He suffers thus for our sins—to save us. I desire now to think of that sorrow; for it is the cause of our joy. "By His bruises we are healed."

Who is He that bows His head to the earth, writhing like a crushed worm, with His gar-

ments and the grass beneath Him dyed in blood? In HIMSELF He is God and man: to the Angels, He is King of kings and Lord of lords, Creator and absolute Owner; in Heaven, the Rewarder of virtue; in Hell, the Avenger of guilt. To us, He is the Redeemer from guilt and its punishment.

REDEEMER is one of those words which means so much that we are dull to perceive any of its meanings. It means Him who ransoms us from Hell; who leads us to the truth; who enlightens our understanding; straightens our crookedness of will; heals our infirmities; pardons our infidelities; who meets us, at the opening of life, with the grace of Baptism, and thence follows us with grace and Sacraments, to the very portals of the grave. It means our Liberator and Teacher, our Guide and Protector; our Defender; the Food and Treasure of our souls; our GOD AND OUR ALL. Pardon me, sweet Jesus! Wo is me! for I am a man of polluted lips, to try to speak of how we ought to love Thee! Do Thou kindle Thy love within us; for only the loving can understand Thy love.

'That sorrowing man, who let grief so overcome Him, for our encouragement and consolation, is our God and our all.

How, then, could Peter, and James, and

John fall asleep, if they know Him to be their all, when they saw the tide of that mighty agony surging in his heart? How could they not watch one hour with Him?

We must not reproach them; but put the question to ourselves. He is all to you and me that He was to them. We never had any good He did not give us. We will never get any comfort worth the name from any other. How is it then, that you and I fell asleep while He was agonizing? He agonizes when men sin. Did we not fall asleep after we had sinned? There was a lethargy on our hearts when we forgot our holy resolutions; left off going to the Sacraments; began to be fond of irreligious company and idle reading, and to indulge in thoughts of pride, anger, jealousy, and voluptuousness; and our eyes were very heavy when we went groping after what the world loves, and never once were raised to see God and Heaven above us. And Jesus was agonizing over us all the time, and saying, "Return to Me: why will ye die?"

Let us see if this sleepiness have not overcome us now, as it has overcome the world. Men seem to be bustling and restless: but their very occupation of growing rich, and feeding appetite, and over-reaching and out-stripping

each other, are the merest idleness. They are sleeping, with no oil in their lamps, and "Lo! the Bridegroom cometh!"

Let us watch the one hour of life with Jesus, our Redeemer, that He may find us, when He comes, with our lamps trimmed and burning in our hands.

Jesus was left alone in His grief. He looked with sad eyes for one to console Him, and found him not. It is so with us. In the great struggle for our salvation, whenever we undertake it, we must encounter the sharpness of sorrow alone. It is so, indeed, with all the world — social intercourse is on joyous topics; society wishes you to amuse it, or flatter or divert it. It does not care about your interests, much less to be burdened with the story of your sorrow. Men live in a crowd, but die alone. But if the soul is alone when it glides onward through the darkness, it is much more so moving upward toward the light. What you do for yourself must be done by yourself. The soul is so great that, in its struggles to reach its goal, it can have no companionship but God's. Friends can stand around a death-bed; they can say farewells and receive blessings; they can press the moist, cold hand, and look into the fading eyes; the priest, kneeling by the bed-side, can hear in whispered accents

with what the conscience of the dying one is upbraiding him;—but what can wife, or brother, or sister, or child know of the mighty contest; the tumult of swarming memories, and hopes, and terrors, and prayers, and resolves with which, as life ebbs away, that soul is filled? They may weep, and tremble, and pray; the Angels and Saints may pray also;—but none can comprehend, and teach, and guide, and save, but God.

When, therefore, in your endeavors to live well you find yourself assailed by a difficulty, which none of your companions seem to understand — so fearful that you dare not tell it to them, be not appalled. Let them sleep on, and do you go through your struggle alone. Even when your closest friends can not understand you, and your very spiritual director offers you no remedy but patience, — struggle on! You are on the right road. It is in the desert that the springs of water are promised in the new dispensation, and the solitude that is to blossom as the rose.

I would not dare undertake, even after reading St. Theresa, and the devout book called the Passion of Christ, and other ascetic writers approved by the Church, to enter into the Heart of Jesus and try to describe His sufferings.

Of course He knew all things; that He had

been betrayed; that in an hour or two he would be delivered into the hands of the Gentiles; be mocked, spit upon, scourged, put to death. He saw the scattering of His disciples, the denial of Peter, the tears of His mother.

There is but one point of His sorrow, on which I will dwell; endeavoring to understand, yet not pretending to fathom. The Prophet says, "God, the Father, placed upon Him, the iniquity of us all." To know how sorrowful, unto death, this made Him, we would have to understand His immeasurable hatred and horror of sin. As God, He hates nothing that He made; but He did not make sin.

Sin is an irreconcilable enmity to His essential Holiness, as darkness is opposed to light, heat to cold, truth to falsehood, good to evil. In His infinite mercy He can forgive the sinner — the sin He can never forgive. And the reason why the torments of the fallen Angels and reprobate men shall know no mitigation for ever, is, because they have set themselves in identity with sin, in such a manner, that favor shown to them would be approval of their malice. In the eyes of God, there is more of evil; more to flee from and to loathe in one single sin, even of thought, than in all the calamities of earth, all the pains of Purgatory, and all the torments of Hell; so that, if one had it

in his power to restore to every living man the innocence, and peace, and immortality of Eden; to set free all the spirits that are waiting in patient sadness the end of their purification; unbar the gates of hell, and send the howling reprobate, fetterless, back, into light; yet, must do it by a single sin, a lie, a curse, an unclean thought, he must leave them as they are. There is more evil in the malice of a single sin than in the punishment of them all.

Now, Jesus Christ, in the Garden, felt Himself clothed with the iniquities of us all. "He placed upon Him the iniquity of us all." He had accepted the mediatorship willingly, looking to the end. Now, He suspended in His human soul, the anticipation of the end, and looked upon Himself only in the present, waiving all thought of any coming change, as though the present moment held within itself the weight of Eternity. His soul was convulsed with agony at the sight of the horrible disfigurement given to it by our sins. The God-man Himself is held a blasphemer, a perjurer, a worshiper of idols, a drunkard, a glutton, one unclean. The Eternal Father looked upon Him as guilty of death. The Angels hid their faces in horror, as He appeared to them an outcast, and a reproach in the Universe. This was the thought that crushed Him to the earth,

and made the hot blood start from His veins as the red juice gushes from the trodden grape. This was the cup He prayed might pass from Him. As if He had said, "I accept the betrayal by one I trusted, and called not servant, but my friend. Welcome, judgment halls of Annas and Caiphas, of Pilate and Herod ; welcome calumnies, scoffs, blows, revilings, purple garment, and thorny crown! Lay on my shoulders the hard Cross; drive the jagged nails through my hands and feet;—but, O Father, do not make me a sinner; number me not with those who hate Thee and rebel against Thee. Gladly will I expiate the sin; but if it be possible, let Me not seem a sinner. Let this cup pass from Me, and I will drink the rest. Nevertheless, not My will but Thine be done."

Herein, reader, appears to our shame, how God's thoughts are not our thoughts. To us, the horror of Christ's Passion is in the sensible sufferings He endured, added to His loss of reputation and favor of men. To Him, it was to be held guilty of sin. We look, with the same crooked vision on what happens to ourselves; and, if we do hate sin, we hate it, not in itself, but for the calamities it entails upon its author. "Do not sin," we say, when we mean our best, "lest evil come upon you;" lest

you forfeit Heaven — incur Hell. Blinder still than we are, the respectable and decent world says: "Do not sin, lest you forfeit health — lose your credit and standing in society." Yet neither the world nor we see, as God sees, that where one sins the calamity has befallen him already. *The sin is the calamity.* It is an evil and a bitter thing to go away from the Lord God. You sinned — but soon repented and confessed; and so no harm came of it. "Ah! foolish and slow of heart;" the harm did come of it, none the less, because its consequences fell, not upon you, but upon the innocent head of Jesus Christ. There is greater measure of evil, says St. Thomas, in the cause of evil than in the sum of all the consequences. There was a greater measure of evil, by fair comparison, in the sin of Adam, than in all its consequences, which have kept his posterity groaning for, now, five thousand years. So, in the least of your or my sins, confessed and forgotten, there was more to be abhorred, and avoided, and regretted, than in the death we tremble at, and in the devouring flame in which no one dare to think he can dwell for ever. This is what Jesus Christ understood and we do not understand. How can there be so much, we say, in a transient thought, a fleeting word, or, even in an act that is begun and ended in a moment?

Inconsistency of human pride! that exaggerates our greatness, urging us to rebel against God, and puts forward our littleness to extenuate our guilt! God says, "Thou shalt not eat;" and we say, "Who is God, that He should dictate to us?" Then God says, "Thou shalt die;" and we say, changing front, "Who are we, that God should be so offended at what we do?"

This inconsistency marks the pride of our age. On one hand, man is too great to bow his intellect to the teachings of Christ, or submit his will to the laws of the Church; and, on the other, he is too little to be noticed and held responsible by God for what he does. Unworthiness is made the excuse for insolence — a man pretends that he must be allowed to annoy and wrong you, because he is worthless and contemptible. Though not great enough to escape the control of the Supreme God, we are still great enough to declare war against Him; and this declaration is greater evil than all others put together; as would be plain enough to our minds did we know what we mean when we say that God is the Supreme Good and the measure of all Good.

Our sins, more than His own calamities, straitened, in that hour of darkness, the Redeemer's heart. More than all others, the sins

that we still cling to, and love, and excuse, and repeat. Our excesses in eating and drinking; our yielding to brutal appetites; our false oaths, blasphemies, infidelities, sacrileges; our envyings, anger, violences; our frauds, thefts, oppressions; our contempt of the laws of the Church and the graces of the Holy Spirit: were in the chalice which He begged might pass from His lips. Is it not time for us to repent of them, confess them, and forsake them once for all?

Do you pity Him? Were He a dumb brute so writhing on the ground, you would. But He is your Saviour, and your heart aches as you see Him suffering. Why, then, relieve Him, by abandoning sin, and the thoughts and aims that lead to sin. Get you on the road to Heaven; cleanse your conscience from guilt; begin a life, on the end of which you are not afraid to think; and, as far as you can do, you have taken the bitterness from His chalice.

"THEN THE CHIEF PRIESTS AND THE WHOLE COUNCIL SOUGHT FALSE TESTIMONY AGAINST JESUS, THAT THEY MIGHT PUT HIM TO DEATH." MATT. XXVI. 59.

They accused Him of being a blasphemer, and therefore without conscience; an imposter and seducer of the people; an enemy to the established government and of the public peace: and, though they proved none of these accusations, yet they established them in the minds of the people. They succeeded in robbing Him of His good name so completely that, had He not risen from the dead, what is called historical truth would have set Him down, for all time, as Tacitus writes, "The attempted founder of a detestable sect, who suffered for his crimes, under Pontius Pilate the Procurator of Judea."

He whom the Father sanctified by communication of His essentially holy nature, and sent into this world that He might make compensation to God for the outrages sin had put upon Him, even to the shedding of the last

drop of His blood, is held a blasphemer! The True Light, enlightening every one that cometh into this world, is called a deceiver by the courts and by the mob. The Author of all law, and the Upholder of all government, is called seditious and rebellious; and the very Prince of Peace, who brought together Heaven and earth, and gave tranquillity to all the children of men, is punished as a disturber of the public quiet. He submitted to this ignominy to atone for our sins of human respect, or those sins which we commit for the sake of the good opinion of men.

There is an indirect idolatry in this sin: that is, a worship of the creature instead of the Creator; for God alone, as we are fond of boasting, is our Master. In His judgment, alone, we stand or fall. It makes no difference in our happiness, whether this man or that one, or in fact all who know us, think well or ill of us — we will settle in Heaven or Hell, according to God's sentence, all the same for that. The majority of society held the Martyrs and Saints of their time in derision; and, now behold, they are numbered with the children of God: and there is awful truth in the old Monkish saying, sung among college boys as a refrain, "Plato and Cicero, and the great master, Aristotle, have sunk into the depths of

Hell." Only God's judgments are just, and, therefore, only they are entitled to respect from the rational soul. Hence, to seek the applause of men—to wait on their opinions, is to put man in the place of God, and so put mortal affront on Him who has said, "Thou shalt have no strange gods before me."

The prophet of old shattered the statue Dagon, and then had it borne, prostrate and mutilated, through the city, crying out, as it passed in sight of the people, "Behold whom you worshiped!" In the Day of Judgment that idol of public opinion will be shattered by the power of truth; and, as the nations stand, in cowering groups, awaiting each his sentence, their terror-stricken aspect will say, plainer than words, "Behold what it was you worshiped!" These were they before whom you were ashamed to confess Jesus Christ, the Author and Finisher of your faith. For fear that these poor wretches would call you simple, or superstitious, or credulous, you outraged God and did violence to your own sense of duty. You bartered your birthright, sold your liberty; dishonored your character of Christian, to propitiate these who, instead of being judges, themselves now await the Judgment.

Let us call to mind, for one moment, the sins

for which Jesus Christ paid, by the loss of His good name. Denial of Faith was the one He specially warned us against. "Him that denies Me before man, will I deny before the Angels of God." Experience sadly shows, as each generation goes by, how needful was the warning. The itching after novelty, which has made heresiarchs, from Montanus to Luther and Renan, or apostates, from Julian to Voltaire, is one form of human respect. All those weeds, that are yearly thrown out of the Pope's garden: unfaithful priests and scandalous monks who are a wonder and sensation in some sect, like the Mexicans that figured lately in Mr. Beecher's church, in Brooklyn, until their rottenness appears, are usually the product of human respect. What is called the learned world in this country, although by this time convinced that the truth is not to be found in its integrity among the non-Catholic sects, still gropes vainly outside the Church, because it dare not face public opinion, and say, after all, the Reformation is a failure and a delusion; a movement away from Christianity, from truth, and from virtue; and the old way is the right way, although it was trodden by popes, and bishops, and monks, and nuns. Here and there, indeed, one man, like Newman or Burnet, gathers courage to see this and to say it;

but the learned world, though it fears it, dare not see it and dare not say it.

"For this was I sent into the world," said Jesus Christ to Pilate, "that I might bear witness to the truth;" and Pilate, true type of the great world, asks neglectfully, "What is truth?" and passed out of the room without waiting for an answer.

Sure enough; What is truth, to the busy, scheming world? Men of research and study tell us, sometimes with sly irony, sometimes with refreshing simplicity, that the love of truth is what urges them on in their investigations. Yet they love only those truths in which the public take concern, and which promote the views or interest of their clique or party; and, because they are not mere debauchers or misers like the mass of men, they delude themselves with the persuasion that their pride of life is devotion to truth. It is a long way from the topmost point of the earth's atmosphere to the blue sky above, where the stars are set: so there is a wide space between the coarse, vulgar, brutal crimes of the herd of pleasure-seekers and money-gathers, and the virtues that have God for motive and end. And this space is filled with works better than beastly — worse than Christian — the works of misdirected mind — of mind that was clear

enough to see the beauty of truth, but not humble enough to worship it.

The Church does not teach us to denounce philosophy, science, poetry, art, as did Martin Luther, and others — his companions; but she teaches that they are useless when they do not lead to God — fragments of truth, disjointed from the main body; as the world keeps them — jewels, sparkling among the mold and darkness of the charnel-house. The philosopher, the poet, the artist, all aglow with eagerness to build themselves that old heathen vanity — a monument more enduring than brass — each thinks his aspiration sublime, because he is looking down on those below him, instead of up at those above him. One may be above a multitude, and not very high after all. Look up, through ten thousand times ten thousand circles of creatures nobler than we, to the inaccessible Light near which stand the veiled Seraphim, and into which, in wave after wave of melody, the never-ending Sanctus eternally rolls, and see there, O aspiring soul! the immortality for which you thirst; see there, where the enduring monument is to be built, and judge thence, and not by looking down upon the poor worms writhing and wriggling among their filthy pleasures

and sordid enterprises, whether or not your aims are as lofty as they should be. Are not those who have understanding enough to seek better things than food and raiment for the body, all the more inexcusable if they seek not that for which they were created? Are not the outrages God endures from us, all the more keenly felt when wit frames them? And is not his wrath more justly kindled, when we not only do it but teach it? Oh! the terrific judgment that awaits the seducer of souls! The false priest, that gave out the oracles of Satan, from the Sanctuary of God; the venal writer, who said, "Go to! I must not let myself be cried down by critics," when he pandered to unjust prejudices, and sent forth what he knew was false; the recreant poet, who sang what was popular, even when it was vicious and obscene: all those, who having received, not one but five talents from the Lord, consumed them in ministering to their pride of life. Wo unto blind guides! for them Jesus Christ is reduced to shame and dishonor in the sight of men. Look at Him, in the purple garment, with the reed scepter in his hand and the crown of thorns upon his brow—see Him, when the servant strikes Him in the face, saying, "Answerest thou the High Priest

so?" when they all buffet Him, and say, "Prophecy unto us, O Christ, who it was that struck Thee!" when they "pass before Him, wagging their heads, and exclaiming, "If Thou be the Son of God, come down from the Cross!" or when the multitude shout out, "Set free the robber! crucify the Christ!"

Look on Him, you who sought to be esteemed learned and wise! You took your prejudice for information; rejected doctrines you never examined; put forth assertions on topics you had never studied; played Sir Oracle to a little clique of dupes: for this, the Infinite Wisdom is reputed foolish; mocked as idiotic. It is you that should have borne those scoffs. It is you and I that should have worn that purple; for when we thought we were wise, were we not fools? When we clung to the earth, grasping after the applause of men, and letting go the good opinion of God and His Angels, were we not quite devoid of reason; and did we not deserve the mockery that fell upon our Redeemer, Jesus Christ? Look upon Him, you that would lead parties, and intrigue, and lie, and cringe, and flatter, and fawn, to win distinction and outstrip rivalry. His friends fled; His enemies triumphant—looking in vain for one to console Him or partake of His grief. Thus He pays

for the success you won at the price of manhood, and conscience, and justice, and truth; for the crimes by which thrones are reached and nominations procured. Because you would mount up, He is brought low; because you would domineer, He is made obedient unto death.

Look upon Him — cut off from the land of the living, with none to tell His generation — you that extol yourselves, and deny the rights of others, through senseless pride of birth. You know that you were conceived in iniquity, born in sin; that the blood of Adam is in your veins, and the stain of original guilt was on your soul at birth; yet you take honor to yourself, because, since Adam's time there have been men of your ancestry who did not live by honest toil, but seized upon, and re-veiled in, the fruits of the toil of other men; nay, as if for lack of all other excellences, you puff yourself up with pride, because you were not born black, and, through this pride, sin in arrogating to yourself what is not yours, and denying to others what is theirs. And, for this vain boasting and guilty arrogance, Jesus Christ, in His Divine nature, co-equal Son of the Eternal God, begotten before all ages — in His human nature, miraculously

sprung from a pure Virgin of David's royal line — is treated as "a worm and no man; crucified, with savage ferocity, before His Mother's eyes. After this, O follower of Christ! never speak of your birth, but of your baptism; recount and emulate the deeds of those who are your kindred, not by blood, but by grace.

For our pride of virtue He was called imposter and blasphemer. The custom of doing good deeds before men, to be seen of them, did not die out with the Pharisees. There are other ways of making a show of piety than broadening phylacteries and praying at street corners. Who is there, with eye so simple, as to see only God in the virtue he practices, and the virtue he does not practice? Who is there that does not give a little more to the poor and the orphan, when the subscription list is to be published, than he does when the poor and the orphan come privately to beg? Who is there that does not fold his hands more meekly, cast down his eyes more modestly, in the presence of God and the congregation, than in presence of God alone? Who is there who does not modulate his tone, and shape his language, when he speaks of the things of God, somewhat at least, according to what he

thinks the piety of those whom he addresses? Who is the Israelite, without guile, who seeks no one's favor, or esteem but God's? I do not say that he does not exist; because I believe he does. It may be the child, kneeling before the altar, that you thought looked so stupid, or the poor old woman you saw blessing herself at the holy water font as you came into church; but wherever he is, like the man that never went after gold nor hoped in money and treasure, he has done wonders in his life. He has learned the lesson of his Saviour's ignominy. He has found out why Jesus Christ suffered Himself to be esteemed a felon. He has learned not to flout the world, and rail upon it, and gnash his teeth at it, in wrath that it does not worship him; but simply and candidly to hold it as naught, and walk in simplicity of heart before God. Who is that person? Whether we find him a priest at the altar, a ruler in his court, a nun in her cloister, a servant in his master's hall — we will praise him.

It is not you, reader, that are satisfied with being as pious as your neighbor; that study his conduct as solicitously as you do your own. It is not you either, who are so touchy about what this one thinks and that one says, and so

anxious to explain matters, and defend yourself, and so fearful that what you did may be misconstrued. Nor you, madam, who, for appearance sake, do not dance round dances nor go to the theater in Lent, and are sorry that appearance exacts it. You have yet to learn why the Author of all holiness was called the vilest name the universe contains — a sinner. Learn it to-day, and put Him to shame no more.

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THE POVERTY OF JESUS CHRIST.

In considering the Poverty of Jesus Christ we ought never to forget that it was his own free choice. "Joy being offered to Him, He bore the Cross." He was God. He could appropriate to Himself what He pleased of the things He had made. It was as easy for Him to heap up gold and gems about Him as to scatter them through the mines or over the bottom of the ocean. The wealth he had given to Cæsar, He might have easily taken to Himself. Mary and Joseph were not poor of necessity, but only because He wanted them to be so. He had not "where to lay His Head," not because He was not master of palaces, but because he chose to be houseless. He died in poverty, simply because He willed it. And He chose this lot for two reasons: first, to show the well-meaning that man can fulfill his whole destiny, without wealth; and second, to expiate the crimes of avarice.

I.

The world is going soon to be educated and free; all men will be equal; wealth will be distributed; and enjoyment universal. This is, to-day, the cry that goes forth to soften the sorrows of humanity. To-day is dark; to-morrow will be bright. Wait awhile, you that toil and sweat under heavy burdens, still looking forward, and seeing no sunlight: wait awhile, the day of freedom and plenty is at hand. So the age fools itself, and, self-deluded, mocks its own misery; for what but mockery is your "wait awhile" to the man whom hunger gnaws, and winter pierces, and debt burdens, and want stares grimly in the face? to the widow who, sick herself, comes home to her sick children without food or medicine? "Wait awhile," O cholera patient! do not writhe so with pain; the world will soon be regenerated. "Wait awhile," you gaunt workmen on the sidewalks, you querulous women in the cellars and attics, you ragged boys in the alleys, you slattern girls on the door-steps: kings will be dethroned and liberty established. And then? Why, then the multitude will remain the multitude, burdened with the material necessities and evils of life; suffering from hunger, cold, fatigue, want, just as before, "hewers of wood and drawers of water" still

This is a free country, and you have become rich in it, Mr. Shoddy. Ours are noble institutions. But when you became rich, what did you but leave the great toiling, struggling, sweating multitude behind? There they are still in the midst of the toil and struggle, just as worthy of consideration as when you were one of them; and there they will remain, through all your revolutions, in spite of all your schools and legislation and clap-trap. All men are equal before God, the Judge; but before God, the Dispenser of temporal gifts, all men are not, and never will be, equal.

“The rank is but the guinea’s stamp;”

But the stamp gives the guinea currency; and all the world contains is nothing more. If kings no longer pass current, regicides will sit in their thrones; and power, denied to Legitimacy, will be wielded by demagogues; but the multitude will be the multitude still. Shall the multitude, therefore, gnash their teeth upon their leaders with envy, and accuse Providence of having created them in vain? If to be rich and enjoy comfort were all man, they might; for they can not hope to be rich and enjoy comfort. But they have hope beyond the grave. JESUS CHRIST, the PERFECT MAN; perfect in His soul, in His body, and in all His surroundings, lived and died without

wealth. Therefore the enjoyment of riches is no part of human dignity or of human happiness. "To fear God and keep His commandments is all man." And it is as easy, nay easier, to do this in poverty as in wealth. To be sure there are extremes of physical suffering that try the soul of the poor almost beyond endurance; but there are also extremes of affluence that puff it up with a pride beyond cure. The meshes of the net that drags us into sin are all made of our useless desires; and these multiply with the means of indulging them, and diminish in proportion to their hopelessness. The man stricken with hopeless poverty dares to want but little; and so his temptations are few. "Blessed are the poor; for theirs is the kingdom of Heaven." We wrestle with the powers of darkness. As the wrestler casts off his clothes for the struggle, so that his adversary may find nothing to cling to in the strife, so ought we to cast aside all that can excite earthly desire, or give any lodgment to the Devil in our souls. Providence does this for the poor; and so, unless false to their opportunities theirs is the kingdom of Heaven. This is the point of view from which to understand that saying of our Lord, "The poor have the Gospel preached to them;" that is, the poor receive glad ti-

dings. No other but the Christian philosophy of life has any comfort for the poor as such. The professional world-reformers promise them escape from poverty through education, the ballot-box, and revolution. But Jesus Christ tells them "Yours is the kingdom of Heaven." To them He points among the shifting generations, and says to His Angels, "These are My brethren." I give to them the lot which I chose for Myself. If they accept it with submission, and bear it with patience, blessed are they! What they suffer is momentary and light; and the weight of glory is eternal. Now, indeed, they have sorrow; but soon they will remember no more the anguish, in the midst of the boundless wealth of Heaven. Therefore, blessed are the poor, not because they can get rich or become powerful; but because they are poor and helpless, and like to JESUS CHRIST!

This is the thought that peopled the deserts of Upper Egypt with solitaries, long ago, and to this day fills with inmates the monastery and the cloister. Poor young woman! she buried her splendid talents, her varied accomplishments, her marvelous beauty in the cloister! Dreamy, deluded enthusiast! when the world was bright before him he shrank from enjoying it, and hid himself away behind vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience! So the

world says; because, to the world, Faith is but a dream, and death, judgment, eternity, words without meaning. But Death is a reality; and we must be judged, and live on for ever in the home our works build for us. Do you pity the man who sold all he had and bought the pearl of great price, or him who made himself owner of the field wherein the treasure was hidden? Do you pity the man who cast away his baggage and swam ashore from the shipwreck? or him who loses all things and saves his soul?

It is not delusion that makes one drive a shrewd bargain. He is no dreamer who knows enough to exchange the temporal for the eternal. To be sure, there is much to fire the heart in the aspect of a God made poor for our sake; much that is alluring, in the peace that passes understanding, which steals over our souls under the shadow of the ALTAR where the BLESSED SACRAMENT is resting. But this Divine love only quickens, does not blind, the understanding; and the warmer it grows the keener is the soul's appreciation of the truth, "if we suffer we shall reign with Him!" When the handmaid becomes the king's bride who says "poor maiden!" so, when the young virgin, prostrate before the altar, vows herself the Bride of Christ, who but an infidel will

dare to say, "She has thrown herself away?" Blessed are the poor; for theirs is the kingdom of Heaven!

Let the poor then take comfort from the poverty of Christ. He would not have chosen poverty for Himself if He had not loved it! He would not have chosen it for you if He had not seen it was for your good. If you are very poor, so was He. If you are forced to see those you love droop and suffer, so did He see His peerless Mother and His foster-father. If you have to be dependent, and suffer slights and contumely, so did He. "If we suffer we shall reign with Him." Let those have the world who choose it for their portion. Let them traffic and succeed, let them venture and accumulate, adding house to house, field to field, gold to gold. Let them monopolize the public press, the literature, the schools, the offices; but let us cling to Jesus Christ in His poverty, to share His wealth.

II.

Who can number the crimes of Avarice which Jesus Christ expiated by being poor?

It is no sin to have wealth or to acquire it; but it is a temptation frightfully near to sin. The possession of money feeds pride, deadens natural kindness, and endangers charity. The

acquirement of money benumbs piety, imperils truth, and endangers justice.

With men who lack faith, to be tempted and to fall are nearly the same thing. The word "purse-proud" is an odious one, often in the mouths of the envious. Yet it expresses a quality we can not fail to meet in the world, unless we go out of it. Men and women without ancestry, without education, without refinement, without any ennobling quality, still hold their heads high in air, speak of their inferiors, and pity their less wealthy neighbors, solely on the ground that they are rich. Why not? Wealth buys service and rank, and consideration, and flattery. The world cringes to it and fawns upon it. If a man may be proud of his dead ancestors, of his knowledge, of his talents, of his personal appearance, why not of his money? The pride of money is just as legitimate, and not a whit more fatal to the soul. The rank is the guinea's stamp; and if the rich clown finds himself passing current as master, why should not he respond by calling those about him servants? Suppose he does make himself ridiculous by groundless pretensions; by criticizing matters of art, science, philosophy, theology, which he does not understand. What proud man does not play the fool before God and His Angels? and who more

than those who are puffed with so-called science. The world may envy him; but it can not condemn him without condemning itself. But Almighty God has to condemn him for his blind, obstinate, senseless pride. The Pharisee was condemned because he said, "I am better than this publican;" but the man whose heart is filled with pride of wealth, assumes as unquestionable, that he is better than others. That is the starting point of all his ideas, affections, schemes and even charities. He acknowledges all men to be equal, except himself; or takes the maxim in the sense, that he is as good as the best of them. As for putting his own interest, his own convenience, on a par with those of others, he never dreams of doing it. He regards his own caprices as law, his actions as models of perfection, his salvation as a foregone conclusion. He even learns to look upon himself as a sort of patron of the Deity, and to think that Christ died for others but not for him. In such a heart there can be no self-annihilation before God; no loving worship of the Babe of Bethlehem, or of the CRUCIFIED; no putting off attachment to the world; no love of humility or poverty; no room for grace; and, of course, no room for charity.

The proud rich may give away money; but

they can never feel charity. Was there charity in the crumbs which Lazarus shared with the dogs, as they fell from the rich man's table? Is there charity in our imprisonment of the poor in county infirmaries and work-houses? Is it charity to toss money to the needy as you would throw a bone to a dog, and hurry on, so as not to be harrowed by the sight of their sufferings? No. There can be no charity without respect, without the feeling of kindred and fellowship which the proud man has not and can not have. There can be no charity where the poor and the rich make two nations, where the master is employed in getting much work on little wages, and the servant is busy in trying to deceive the master, where the wealthy help the needy to prevent riot and sedition, and the needy are held back from plundering only by the hand of power. How few among the rich give with the motive that sanctifies their generosity, with the respect due to the Image of Christ?

How few too give in that proportion to their means which the law of charity demands. Two-fiftieths, says St. Liguori, of what remains over a decent support, is the least that any one can give to the poor, and save his soul. How few give even this! Many count among their

charities what they give in support of their Pastors; they might as well count what they pay in discharging their debts! Yet even so, but few rich, out of the great number in society, do enough to fulfill the actual obligation of the law of charity; because the heart grows cold amid the cares of wealth, and its display and self indulgence, and charity is driven away by pride.

But it is in the acquisition of wealth more than in its possession that the butchery of souls takes place. Beginning in the unchecked desire and ending in the lawless act, there is scarcely a passion that avarice does not foment, or a crime that it does not occasion.

The poor must not imagine that they never sin through avarice. They are blessed sharers in the lot of Jesus Christ, it is true. But, like the rest of men, they seldom know their blessedness. They do not love to be poor. They repine at their condition and complain of Providence, thus rebelling against God. They wither with envy of the better fortune of their neighbors and thus wound charity. They frame desires and indulge them as far as they dare without violating human law, and thus offend against justice. They often meditate, yea, and practice deceit and fraud, and petty

thieving. These things were what made the poverty of Jesus Christ sharper to Him, for these were the things He had to expiate.

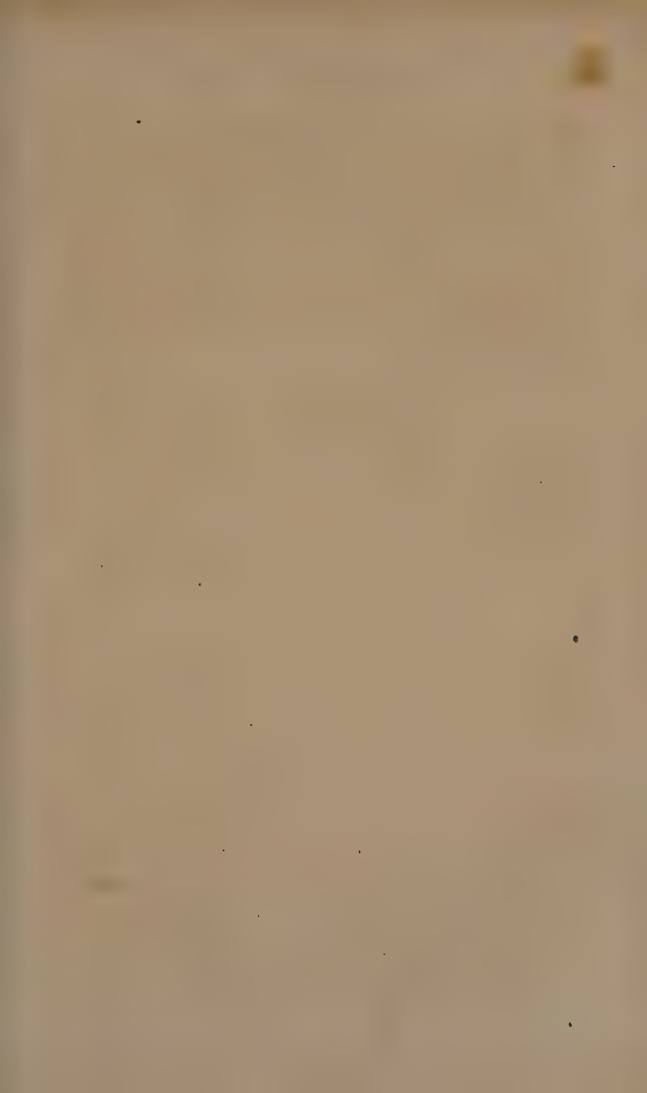
The greed of gain finds its first lodgment in the heart under a very specious seeming. Is it not laudable to desire not to be a burthen to others? Is it not right to wish to place those we love beyond the reach of want? Is it not even generous to aim at wealth as the means of doing good? O youth, youth, who give this name to the new emotions that are thrilling your heartstrings! you have begun a wrestle with a giant, and you arm him thrice, when you try to persuade yourself that he is a friendly one! You do not want to be a burthen to your friends! Is that the reason why you burthen them with a demand for capital to begin your career of independence? You want to place those you love beyond the reach of want! In a short time you will tell them to take care of themselves, to be frugal and industrious, as you have been, and they will not need the charity of others! You want the means of doing good! Do you do good with the means you have already? Are your sympathies, and your efforts with the desolate now? Have you ever a kind look and a gentle word, for those that suffer? Alas! when you are

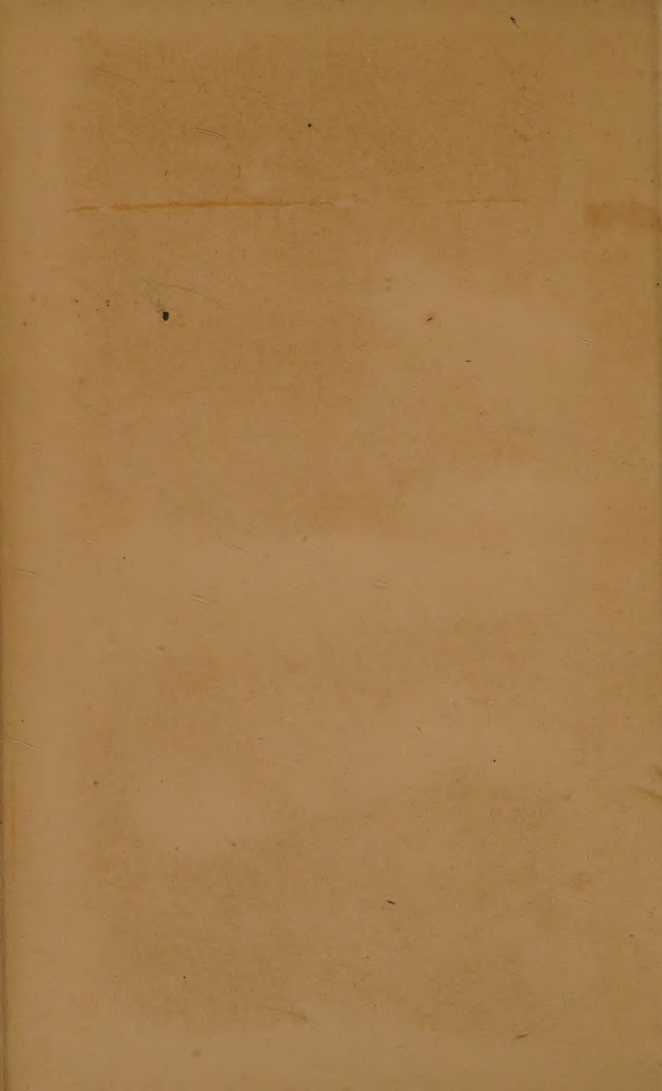
surrounded by plenty, your desire of doing good will still remain what it is now—a dream. In the meantime, in climbing the steep road to fortune what may you not meet? You must buy cheap, and sell dear. You must give up, no you must sell, youthful freshness of heart, loyalty to your friends, the noble impulses with which you were once stirred to be more than a benefactor to yourself. You must steel your heart against natural affection and make your friendships pay. You must lay snares for those who trust you, and profit by their credulity. You find soon that good bargains are better made by lying, and you lie. You find it an easy way to prosper to appropriate what belongs to others, to yourself. This you can not always do by flattery and deceit, and you learn to steal. It may be you steal from the widow and the orphan. It may be that murder and arson are in the way of your gain, and you go through murder and arson. The greed of gain is an open gate to all crimes, to murder, robbery, cheating, theft, lying, oppression of the poor, hypocrisy of the most loathsome character. It fills prisons and makes scaffolds a necessity. It kindles conflagrations and stirs up wars. It sets class against class, kindred against kindred, and makes earth a hell. No

wonder Jesus Christ was *very* poor—he had to expiate so many sins of avarice, and prove to such a multitude that no grade of destitution is an excuse for crime! What multitudes he had to silence by his meek example of poverty! Look around you and see if vice has not become almost the irresistible fashion. The servant filches from his employer; the laborer charges for work he never did; the artisan steals materials or does bad work for his customers; the trader can not make a living if he does not ask more for his goods than they are worth, and lie about the cost of them; the banker will break if he does not exact extortionate interests; the lawyer will not succeed if he does not foment quarrels, and urge on hopeless lawsuits; the capitalist will lose his fortune if he does not gamble in stocks, and use his wits to gain what others are losing. Everywhere in society avarice has set up its laws and established its maxims. Everywhere it makes traffic of patriotism, of piety, of charity, and family affection.

And this great torrent of sin Jesus Christ had to remove and efface by his life and death of poverty and pain. He did it thoroughly, and the door stands open for all who have begun to find that money does not pay for the soul,

and to long for treasures where neither moth nor rust corrupts, nor do thieves break through and steal, to return to virtue and to God. He paid for each sin in kind, and we have but to ask him and he will blot out every one that stains us. Let us accept His mediation and profit by his offer.





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AUTHOR

The divinity of Christ

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